

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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CHILD'S SPRING SONG.

THE swift is wheeling and gleaming,
The brook is brown in its bed,
Rain from the cloud is streaming,
And the Bow bends overhead :
The charm of the winter is broken ! the last
of the spell is said !

Out of the east one morning
The Graybeard came in sight,
But his elves with never a warning
Had been at work all night,
Tinkling at trees and windows, and hanging
the world in white.

Up, with a foggy breathing,
His nose all red with cold,
Round him the vapours wreathing,
O'er him the dark clouds rolled,
Came Winter that weary morning, bearded
and frail and old.

The sharp wind blew behind him,
The sharp wind blew before,
The thick snow tried to blind him,
His feet were chilly and sore :
You could hear his wheezing and coughing, a
hundred miles and more !

Slowly, with feet that lingered,
Up the hills and down,
Chilly footed and fingered,
He came to our good town :
The fog was a robe around him, the frost had
make him a crown.

Bitter he seemed and weary,
As he the steeple spied,
All looked white and dreary
Under its far and wide ;
But when to the pond he wander'd, the boys
were making a slide.

Comforters warm and woollen,
Boots all thick and strong,
With not a feature sullen
There they cried in a throng :
And the robin sat on the paling, watching
and singing a song !

Then seeing a sight so jolly
Old Winter nodded his head,
And drew out a bunch of holly
With berries all ripe and red,
And he waved the holly for magic, while
down the slide they sped.

And suddenly with no warning,
All at the pleasant sign,
The bells rang out in the morning,
And the sun began to shine —
And the host at the inn-door chuckled, and
all the world looked fine !

. . . But now the earth is green again,
And the blue swift wheels in the air ;
Leaves on the hedge are seen again,
And the rain is rich and rare,
And all for another promise, the Bow bends
bright up there.

The Bow bends out of the heaven,
Out of the cloud o'erhead,
The hues in the Bow are seven,
From yellow to purple and red —
Its foot in the churchyard resteth, bright on
the graves of the dead.

The eel in the pond is quickening
The grayling leaps in the stream,
What if the clouds are thickening,
See how the meadows gleam !
The spell of the winter is shaken, the world
awakes from a dream !

The fir puts out green fingers,
The pear-tree softly blows,
The rose in her dark bower lingers,
But her curtains will soon uncloze ;
The lilac will shake her ringlets, over the
blush of the rose.

The swift is wheeling and gleaming,
The woods are beginning to ring,
Rain from the clouds is streaming ;
There, where the Bow doth cling,
Summer is smiling afar off, over the shoulder
of Spring !

Good Words.

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

INVALIDED.

Ah ! to be able to rise,
And leave the wearisome room,
And be out once more under sunny skies,
Away from this dull, close gloom !

I dream of lying at ease
Among the fern and the grass,
And looking up through the long-branched trees,
Watching the small clouds pass.

I pull the blossoms that grow
In the soft moss under my hand,
And welcome the health-giving winds that blow,
Cooling the summer land.

And ah ! it is all so bright,
And the happiness is so great ! —
But the dream in a moment has taken flight,
And I turn with a sigh, to wait.

Chambers' Journals.

From The British Quarterly Review.
THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE.*

THE study of pre-Renaissance literature belongs especially to the present century. A few ballads had been previously rescued from oblivion; a few names unearthed from the rubbish of centuries; but the great mass of writers who lived and flourished in what men used to call the Dark Ages had been utterly forgotten, names as well as writings, until the labours of Ampère, Fauriel, Raynouard, and others in France, as well as those of our own antiquarian scholars in England, brought them again to light within the last fifty years.

The literature thus revived has a value of its own quite independent of any literary merit though this is by no means contemptible. It reveals to us not only the manners and customs of the time, the mediæval daily life, but, which is much more important, the mediæval conditions and modes of thought, within such limits — too narrow, alas! — as the conventional rules of poetry allowed. But artificial grooves cannot wholly prevent a vigorous mind from running off the beaten track, and in spite of conventionalism, the reader comes sometimes, in the midst of sandy deserts of commonplace morality, monotonous repetitions, and thirsty verbiage, upon oases of such exceeding brightness and splendour, cooled with fountains so sparkling and foliage so luxuriant, that he feels he is repaid for all his trouble. And the country is by no means explored. As in the great goldfields of Australia, the big nuggets have disappeared and been gathered up long since; nevertheless there remain, for those who have patience to dig, plenty of smaller pieces of virgin gold, which may amply serve to reward their toil. But because all have not the time or the opportunity for this work, and because, after all, it lies a good deal out of the beaten track of scholars, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to invite them to come with us and visit, sparing themselves the trouble of looking for them, certain oases which lie scattered

about in a vast Sahara of verse called the "Romance of the Rose." "Rien n'est agréable et piquant," says Sainte Beuve, "comme un guide familier dans les époques lointaines."

Our sketch of the book will be necessarily incomplete; nor could any ordinary limits of a paper suffice for its thorough examination. Its importance is evidenced by the fact that for two hundred and fifty years it was a sort of Bible to France; the source whence its readers drew their maxims of morality, their philosophy, their science, their history, and even their religion; and which, after having retained its popularity for a length of time almost unparalleled in the history of literature, was revived with success after the Renaissance, the only mediæval book which enjoyed this distinction.

We shall endeavour to show some of the reasons of this long-continued success, and to prove that the book, once the companion of knights and dames of *damoiseaux* and *damoiselles*, has the strongest claims on the student of the Middle Ages; that it is not a congeries of dry and dead bones of antiquity, not a mass of mediæval fables, but a book full of ideas, information, and suggestion — a book warm with life.

France, whence it came, is indeed the mother of modern literature. Thence both Italy and England derived their inspiration. In the countries of Provence and Languedoc lingered longest the remains of the Latin civilization: there the lamp of learning, dwindled down at last to a mere speck, had yet flame enough to light the new taper of the troubadour; there was first heard the "Nibelungen Lied;" there originated the *tenson*, the *canço*, the *sirvente*, the *chanson royale*, the *triolet*, and all the varied forms of mediæval poetry; and there was the chosen home of such philosophy and science as existed between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. English writers before the Elizabethan age copied openly and avowedly from French sources, taking plot, plan, and framework of their poems. Even Dante deferred to Provence, and owned that the troubadour led the thought of Western Europe. Other countries of Europe have little indeed in their early

* (1.) *Le Roman de la Rose*. Nouvelle édition. Par Francisque Michel. Paris: Firmin Didot Frères. 1864.

literature to compare with the treasures of the Langue d'Oc and the Langue d'Oil; and while, outside France, stand almost alone the great figures of Dante, Petrarch, and Chaucer, there is, within the circle of the Langue d'Oil alone, a constellation in which are the names of Marie de France, Rutebeuf, Jean de Meung, Charles of Orleans, Christine de Pisan, Alain Chartier, Eustache Deschamps, and François Villon, besides a host of minor poets whose works are little inferior, and who may still be read, if not always with delight, certainly always with profit. Scattered about in their writings is the whole of the mediæval life; by their light we can penetrate through the clouds of six hundred years, and bring those picturesque ages of colour and splendour back to our minds as brightly and vividly as we realize any battle-field in France by the pen of a special correspondent. And besides the mediæval life, with its habits and its thought, the student will trace in this poetry the gradual development of the true French Muse — her mockery, her satirical spirit, her cynicism, her incredulity, her curiosity, her want of reverence, with her inimitable wit and fresh buoyancy of spirit — a muse *gaillarde et moqueuse*, unlike any other that the world has seen, whom to know is to love, though not always to respect. It is no fault of modern France if her old literature is not known as it deserves to be. Editions have been multiplied of the fabliaux, romances, poems, and chronicles which began with Wace and ended with Clement Marot. But as yet no great writer has taken up the subject as it deserves, and a consolidated history of the literature and thought of the Middle Ages, from the tenth century to the Renaissance, embracing as a whole, and not in unconnected parts, the writings of Italy, France, and England, with those of Spain and Germany, is a work which awaits the hand of some man who will devote to it the greater part of a lifetime. Materials for such a work amply exist; but he who undertakes it should bring to his task a knowledge of languages and an amount of reading rare indeed, and difficult to be found.

English readers principally know this

"Romance of the Rose" through the translation which is attributed to Chaucer. Whether it be really his or not is a matter which does not concern us here, and, to save trouble of explanation, we will refer to it as Chaucer's translation. It is unfortunate in some respects, that it contains only a portion — viz., the first 5,170 lines, and then, with an omission of 5,544 lines, about 1,300 more. It gives entire the portion contributed by Guillaume de Lorris, and as much of the remainder as fell in most readily with the humour of the translator, the attack on the hypocrisy of monks and friars. But by omitting all the rest, amounting to about two-thirds of the whole, he has failed altogether in giving the spirit of the work; and those who read only Chaucer's version would certainly be at a loss to explain the rapid, extraordinary, and lasting popularity which the book achieved.

The reasons of this popularity have, indeed, been the subject of considerable discussion among French critics. Pasquier speaks of its "noble sentiments," and considers that its object was moral — viz., to show that love is but a dream. Roquefort can see in it only a long and rather stupid allegory, enlivened by occasional gleams of poetry; Villemain considers it a mere gloze on Ovid's "Art of Love," with a *mélange* of abstractions, allegories, and and scholastic subtilties. Nisard deduces from its popularity a proof of its entire conformity with the spirit of the age — an almost obvious conclusion. Other writers, Goujet among the number, try to account for its success by the reputation which Jean de Meung enjoyed as an alchemist, and the belief that the great secrets of the science were to be found in the poem: a manifestly inadequate reason, because the proportion of alchemists to the rest of his readers must have been small indeed. Others, among whom were Molinet and Marot — of whom more presently — thought its success was due to a double allegory which they found in it; while Professor Morley and Mr. Thomas Wright, the latest writers who have given any account of the book — both of them meagre, dry, and uninteresting — do not attempt to explain its popularity at all. There are

sufficient reasons why the book sprang at once into favour, which we hope presently to explain. The great success which is attained is illustrated by the number and weight of its assailants. Foremost among these was Gerson, the "most Christian Doctor." He calls it a book written for the basest purposes; he says that if there were only one copy of it in the world, and if he were offered fifty pounds in gold for it, he would rather burn it: that those who have it ought to give it up to their father confessors to be destroyed: and that even if it were certain—which was unfortunately far from being the case, the contrary being presumable—that Jean de Meung had repented his sins in sackcloth and ashes, it would be no more use praying for him than for Judas Iscariot himself. Cursing so ecclesiastical, invective so angry, stimulated public curiosity more and more, and instead of copies being given to confessors to be burned, copies were given to scribes to be multiplied. Assailants came every day unto the field. Christine de Pisan, later on, took up the cause of her sex, and vindicated woman-kind from the sweeping charges made against them by the poet; while Martin Franc, who styled himself "*Le Champion des Dames*," wrote an elaborate apology for his clients, which has all the dreariness of the "*Romance of the Rose*," and none of its brightness. The one is a desert indeed; the other, as we have said, is a desert with oases.

The book is the work of two writers, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung. The earlier of these seems to have died about the time that his successor was born. Of his life we know absolutely nothing. He came from the little town of Lorris, where, it is said, the house in which he was born is still shown. Two or three lines in the poem are cited to prove the date of his birth and death. These, however, are by no means to be relied upon. Thus, he tells us in his opening lines—

"Au vingtiesme an de mon aage,
Si vi ung songe à mon dormant."

whence most writers have assumed that he died at the age of twenty, considering, we suppose, that it would not take a year to

write the 4,670 lines which form his part. This would be, at least, quick writing, while internal evidence seems to us to point most unmistakably to the bestowal of very careful thought, and therefore much time upon the work. And the lines which follow shortly after have not received proper attention—indeed, hardly any modern writer on the "*Romance of the Rose*" appears to have read the book at all. Here the poet says—

"Avis m'iere qu'il étoit mains;
Il a j'à bien cinc ans au mains."

which would make him five-and-twenty at least, a much more likely age, considering the work he had done, for his death.

At the close of his part of the book we get the following note by the scholiast, if we may call him so:—

"Ci endroit, trespassa Guillaume
De Lorris et ne fist plus pseume;
Mais après plus de quarante ans
Maistre Jehan de Meung li romans
Parfist, ainsi comme je treuve,
Et ici commence son œuvre."

That is,—

"Here William died; his song was done.

When forty years had passed away.

Sir John the romance carried on,

And here commencing, told the lay."

While Jean de Meung himself says, prophesying after the event—

"Car quant Guillaume cessera
Jehan le continuera
Après sa mort que je ne mente
Anns trespassées plus de quarente."

So that if we fix the date of Jean de Meung, we have that of Guillaume de Lorris. Now, there is nothing to help us except a tradition that Guillaume died in the middle of the thirteenth century, and whatever internal evidence the book itself affords. Most writers, because the order of Knights Templars is mentioned as still existing, have been content to date the book at about 1306, the year before the destruction of the fraternity; but the poet mentions Charles of Anjou as King of Sicily. We have, therefore, a much lower limit, viz., the year 1282. Perhaps on closer examination, a range of years might easily be found in which the book was written. It is, however, sufficient for our purpose to

date its authorship about 1280, and that of Guillaume de Lorris at 1240.

It is not at all certain that the poet was very young when he feigned his dream. The hero of the poem is necessarily a young man. Early manhood is the period of vehement desire and passion. Twenty is the typical age of early manhood; that age may have very well been selected as the one best fitted for dreams of love and the adventures of a lover. We are, however, inclined to believe, on the whole, that the poem was written in quite early manhood. A tradition which only recalls one fact is generally true, and the one fact recorded of the poet is that he died quite young. Internal evidence, too, appears to support this view. His style bears marks which seem, though one may here be very easily mistaken, those of inexperience. His imaginative faculty is abundant, and even luxuriant. His descriptive power, fully employed in his portraits of abstract personifications, is very much above the average. He revels in picturesque accessories and details which his copious fancy has conjured up; and his pictures, if they have not always the *tone*, have all the vividness, with the wealth of work, which belongs to a young poet's early style. The versification, moreover, is cold, regular, and monotonous; there is nothing to indicate the possession of experience or the presence of passion. He had read Ovid, and used him freely to suit his own purposes; but he wants Ovid's sympathetic power, and tries to supply its place by a certain cold and mannered grace; his faults being attributable, in the assumption of his early death, more to inexperience and youth, than to any defects which years would not have removed. Considered in this light, his work remains an unfinished monument of early genius, chiefly redeemed from mediocrity by its collections of curiously constructed allegorical portraits, a work which would never have been rescued from oblivion but for the splendour of light thrown on it by Jean de Meung.

Chaucer's translation is exceedingly accurate, giving line for line, and almost word for word, save when he sometimes adds a line to enforce its meaning, or to make it clear. Thus, when translating the famous

"La robe ne faict pas le moyne,"

he says—

"Habite ne makyth monk ne frere;
But clene life and devocioun,
Makyth gode men of religioun."

The saying itself (for nothing in the

"Romance of the Rose" appears to be original), may be traced to Neckham, who died at Cirencester in 1217.

"Non tonsura facit monachum, nec horrida vestis,

Sed virtus animi, perpetuusque vigor."

The great ease of the translation makes it read almost like an original work, though we cannot agree with those who think that the translator has improved on his model. No literal translation, not even the very best, can be free from a certain stiffness and constraint.

The felicity with which difficult passages are occasionally rendered may be judged by the following lines, which contain a touch almost worthy of Shirley. It is, if our own experience be worth anything, excessively hard to translate. We subjoin original and translation, side by side.

"Les yeux gros et si envol-	"His eyes greye and glad
also,	
Qu'il riolent tousjors	That laugheden ay in hir
avant	semblaunt,
Quela bouchette par cou-	First or the mouth by
vant."	covenant."

That is, her eyes began to laugh before her lips.

We must, as briefly as possible, set forth the action of the poem. It begins, like De Guilleville's "Pilgrimage of Grace," Chaucer's "Court of Love," (borrowed, of course, from this), Alain de l'Isle's "Complaint of Nature," and so many other mediæval works, with a dream. In the month of May,—that season when the earth forgets the poverty of winter, and grows proud of her renewed beauty, clothing herself in a robe of flowers of a hundred colours; when the birds, silent during the long cold months, awake again, and are so joyous that they are fain, *per force*, to sing—the youth of twenty summers wanders forth and comes upon the Garden of Delight (*Déduit*). We may remark here, how the walled garden, secured from the outer world, is the mediæval writer's only idea of scenery. Perhaps our modern craving for the picturesque would be greatly modified if we were uncertain, as our ancestors were, about wolves, bears, and brigands, whose admiration for wild scenes induces them to inhabit them.

The wall of the garden is painted with figures of all evil passions, such as Envy, Hatred, Avarice, and Hypocrisy (*Papelerdie*), with those of Sorrow, Age, and Poverty. The youth is admitted at a wicket by the Lady Oyseuse (*Idlesse*), and wanders about, admiring the rows of strange trees, the birds and flowers, the peace and safety of the place. Presently he comes

upon *Déduit* himself, whom Chaucer calls *Myrthe*.

"Ful fayre was Myrthe, ful long and high :
A fayrer man I never sigh."

With him are all his courtiers, including *Léesce* (Joy).

"And wot ye who came with them there?
The Lady Gladness, bright and fair."

With the company was the God of Love, accompanied by *Douz Regard*, bearing two bows: one of them was crooked and misshapen; the other straight, and beautifully wrought. This shows the different impressions of love, or its opposite, produced by the eyes. He had, too, ten arrows (the idea is borrowed from Ovid), five belonging to Love, viz., Beauty, Simplicity, Frankness, Company, and Fair Semblance; and five to Dislike, viz., Pride, Villany, Shame, Despair, and New Thought. Love was followed as well by Beauty, whose attendants were Riches, Largesse, Franchise, and Courtesy, as *Dames d'honneur*, each of whom had with her a lover, that of Largesse being "sib to Arthur, Duke of Bretaigne." This is intended, of course, to show how different qualities attract love.

The garden is square; it contains all sorts of fruit trees, "brought from the country of the Saracens;" these are set five or six fathoms apart; wells, fountains, and streams, soft grass and turf, and flowers of every kind. Round the stone-work of one fountain he finds written, "Here died the fair Narcissus,"—an accident which enables the poet to narrate at length the full history of that unfortunate swain. Getting over his digression, the youth discovers a rosebush laden with roses and rosebuds, one of which he desires incontinently to pluck. Here his troubles begin. Love shoots at him with five arrows, and when he is sick and faint with wounds, calls upon him to surrender, and become his vassal. This he does, giving Love as a gage of fealty his heart, and receiving in return a code of rules which have been imitated by many subsequent poets, notably by Chaucer, in the "Court of Love," and by Charles of Orleans. He also receives as a mark of especial favour, Hope, *Doux Penser*, *Doux Parler*, and *Doux Regard*—Sweet-Thought, Sweet-Speech, and Sweet-Looks—as companions. He makes a rash and ill-considered attempt upon his Rosebud. But Danger is there with Malebouche, Shame (child of Trespass and Reason), and Chastity, the daughter of Shame. He is driven away, loaded with reproaches. His companions leave him,

and while he is sitting dejected and despairing, Reason comes to him and argues on the folly of love.

"Love is but madness! I tell you true;
The man who loves can nothing do.
He has no profit from the earth:
If he is clerk, he forgets his learning:
If anything else, whatever his worth,
Great is his labour and little his earning.
Long and unmeasured and deep the pain:
Short is the joy; the fruition vain."

But the pleading of Reason, as generally happens in such cases, is quite useless. The lover

"For still within my heart there glows
The breath divine of that sweet Rose,"

goes next to a Friend (*Ami*), from whom he gets small sympathy, but much practical relief. Acting on his counsel, he begs pardon of Danger, who grants it sulkily. Danger in most mediæval allegories stands for the husband, but there is nothing to show that Guillaume de Lorris meant him to be understood in this sense, and we may without any violence take him to represent the natural guardian of the damsel. Getting *Bel Accueil* to accompany him, he goes once more to see his Rosebud, which he finds greatly improved. Venus obtains for him the privilege of a kiss. Shame, Jealousy, and Malebouche, are alarmed, and interfere. Danger turns everybody out. Jealousy builds a high tower, in which *Bel Accueil* is shut up, a prisoner, with Danger and Malebouche to guard him. Outside the tower sits the disconsolate lover, lamenting his misfortunes, and the mutability of love's favours, which he compares to those of Fortune of whom he says:

"In heart of man,
Malice she plants, and labour, and pain;
One hour carresses, and smiles, and plays;
Then as suddenly changes her face:
Laughs one moment, the next she mourns:
Round and round her wheel she turns,
All at her own caprice and will.
The lowest ascends, and is raised, until
He who was highest was low on the ground,
And the wheel of Fortune has quite turned round."

And at this point the poet died—"trepassa Guillaume de Lorris." Had he lived to complete his work we should have had a complete *Ars Amoris*, fashioned on the precepts of Ovid, and clothed in an allegory—cold, monotonous, bloodless—though graceful, fanciful, and not devoid of poetic taste.

Perhaps we should have had more than

this. In its simple, first meaning, it is not difficult for anyone to make out. Idleness or Leisure alone makes Pleasure possible; through Idleness we enter into the garden of Delight, where Love wanders. Youth is the season of love, and Spring is an emblem of youth. The escort of Love is the collection of qualities which belong to the time of youth, and make it happy, such as beauty, wealth, and courtesy. What has Reason to do with Love? Who can advise but an experienced friend? The only possession that the vassal can give to Love the suzerain is his own heart; the chief aid to success is Bel Accueil — "fair welcome" — while Envy, Shame (for fear of Malebouche — Calumny), Jealousy, and Chastity protect the maiden.

So far all is clear and easy to be read. Was there not, however, under an interpretation as easy as that of Bunyan's Holy War, a second and a deeper meaning? It is a question not easy to answer. Molinet, the dull and laborious Molinet, who published, towards the end of the fifteenth century, an edition of the book in prose,

"Le Roman de la Rose
Moralisé cler et net
Translaté en rime et prose
Par votre humble Molinet,"

pretends not only that there is a hidden meaning, but also to discover what this hidden meaning was. "The young man," he tells us, "who awakens from his dream is the child born to the light: he is born in the month of May, when the birds sing: the singing of the birds is the preaching of holy doctors (!)" He dresses, in his dreams, to go out. This is the entrance of the child into the world, enveloped in human miseries: the river represents Baptism; the orchard is the Cloister of Religion; outside it, because they cannot enter therein, and have no share or part in paradise, are the figures of human vices. *Déduit* is our Lord; *Léesce* is the Church; Love is the Holy Spirit; the eight doves of Venus's chariot are the eight Beatitudes; and the combat between Love and the guardians of Bel Accueil is the perpetual contest between good and evil. Even the story of Narcissus is not without its meaning; and the pine which shades the fountain is the tree of the Cross, while the fountain itself is the overflowing stream of mercy. Love, again, in the latter part, stands for our Saviour; homage to him is the profession of faith of a novice; the commandments of Love are the vows of chastity and poverty. Even the legend of

Virginia is an allegory; the maiden being the soul, and Appius the world. This position he strengthens by deriving, after the fashion of the philologists of the period, the name of Appius from *a*, privative, and *pius*.

Clement Marot, on the other hand, in his edition, where he turned the language into French of his own day, and thereby utterly spoiled it, finds an interpretation of his own, quite as ingenious and quite as improbable as that of Molinet. The Rose is the state of wisdom, "*bien et justement conforme à la Rose pour les valeurs, douleurs, et odours qui en elle sont: la quelle moult est à avoir difficile pour les empedemens interposez.*" It was a Papal Rose, made of gold, and scented with musk and balm; of gold on account of the honour and reverence due to God; scented with musk to symbolize the duties of fidelity and justice to our neighbours; and with balm because we ought to hold our own souls clear and precious above all worldly things.

Or, the Rose is the state of Grace, difficult for the sinner to arrive at, and fitly symbolized by the flowers which had sufficient virtue to transform Apuleius from an ass back to his human shape.

Or, again, the Rose was the Virgin Mary — the Rose of Jericho, pure and spotless, and not to be touched by human hands.

Fourthly: it was the rose which the Queen of Sheba gave to Solomon, which signified eternal happiness. The interpretations of Molinet and Marot are both manifestly absurd, and represent the pedantic trifling of a time when the taste for double allegories had been carried to a ridiculous extent. And as for Jean de Meung's part, there are plenty of touches in it which show that the writer, though no heretic, had little sympathy with church matters; and would certainly not be disposed to spend his time in laboriously concocting a riddle of twenty thousand lines, the answer to which was to be found in the Romish creed. And in Guillaume de Lorris himself, it is difficult to find a word for or against the Church. He was, no doubt, mindful of the stern lesson read to heretics in the crusade of Provence, fresh in all men's recollection. But he had been nurtured and fed on the poetry of the troubadours; the form of his verse and the turn of his thought were Provençal. Was it likely that so young a writer should escape the spirit of the literature while he studied its form? And since in a time of violent religious excitement, he can find

no word of sympathy for a church which persecutes, is it not probable that his sympathies are, if not with the Church persecuted, at least with the people? The probability, moreover, of there being a double allegory in the "Romance of the Rose," as planned originally by Guillaume de Lorris, appears to us to be strengthened by a further consideration of the Provençal literature and the line of its development.

Love, in a time when life had few pleasures and distractions to offer — when these were generally only to be snatched in the intervals of fighting — became not only the symbol of all life's joy, but grew into a kind of religion. It had its own ritual, its ceremonies, its sacraments, its lessons, and its hymns. Aged poets were its bishops, the guardians of its forms; young poets its priests: instead of the images of saints, were living women, and instead of the procession and the chant, were the love song and the dance. It was nothing new to the Provençal to celebrate the religious worship with a dance. He alone, among Christians, preserved a custom handed down from old pagan times, and as late as the sixteenth century, the worthy people of Marseilles welcomed Christmas in this way.

The other sex would naturally offer few obstacles to a homage which, though it sometimes destroyed their virtue, always flattered their vanity, and invested them with a power which was beyond that of kings. Princes, indeed, might make men rich, but women alone could make men happy. An accurate knowledge of love's ceremonies became part of the education of a gentleman; these were reduced, like those of chivalry, to a sort of code; questions of law, so to speak, arose, which were tried with great solemnity at courts of law where ladies were judges; appeals from these decisions were often made to higher courts, and there is every reason to believe that the *Arrêts d'Amour*, numerous examples of which are given in the work of Martial d'Auvergne, were courts as serious and as gravely disputed in times of peace, as those which decided other differences of opinion. From being, therefore, the legitimate end of a young man's hope, the chief solace of his life, love grew gradually to be surrounded by all sorts of restrictions and ceremonies, and losing its charm of spontaneity and freedom, was idealized until it lost itself, and became the mere shadow of a poetic dream. As every idea, pushed beyond its legitimate limits, provokes some kind of rebellion,

two streams of thought presently diverged from the main channel, one of them, with which we have nothing to do, satirical, cynical, earthly and gross; the other, religious. Sexual love is only possible, or is strongest when life is young and the blood is strong and hopeful; as years creep on and the end of things approaches, its insufficiency to satisfy the cravings of the soul must become, even to its most ardent votary, more and more deeply apparent. The days when a smile from his mistress made him, according to the rules of the craft, happy, or a frown miserable, would leave behind them, when they had passed away, an increased sense of the real seriousness of life; while at the best of times, the art of love would not be felt as anything but elegant trifling, and the passion which it excited, transitory. Women, too, the object of all this homage, were really, though they might not know it, degraded by what was intended to do them honour.

And let those who lament the subjection of the sex, own that the extravagant honour paid to ladies in the Middle Ages has had something, at least, to do with it. From some such feelings as the above, we believe it came to pass that the poet began first to imagine, and then to contrive, for his love songs a deeper and a mystical meaning. The sentiment of nearly all the Provençal poets, as regards women, was delicate, elevating to themselves, and enthusiastic. Women are to men, in the poet's imagination, what heaven is to earth; their gentleness contrasts with man's ferocity, their weakness with his strength, their strength with his weakness. Love is the principle of all honour and merit, the mainspring of every noble action; its desires and its pleasures are only legitimate, inasmuch as they are as a stimulus to the painful duties of chivalry; the springs of poetry are in love; without love there is nothing that civilizes, softens, or elevates. But earthly love, so high, so pure, so separated from the common instincts of the world, is but a type of that infinitely higher and purer heavenly love. All the allegories of the poets are to be read in a deeper sense by those who are initiated into the mysteries, and when a poet sings songs of love, he is singing songs of a mysterious religion.

That this was the case with all the troubadours, or even with most of them, we do not affirm; that it was at one time believed to be true of all seems tolerably clear. And no doubt many an honest bard, quite simply putting down his thoughts about his mistress's lips, or the tangles of her

hair, would have been astonished to hear that he was preaching the glories of the Virgin, or advocating a free and Popeless Church. On the supposition that Guillaume de Lorris was one of those who had learned from the troubadours the art of double allegory, and that he conveyed religious teaching under this disguise, we should expect to find the key to his poem in the religious difficulties of his time. It is not, at least, difficult to get at these.

The people of Provence* had always mixed freely with the educated Mahomedans of Spain, and the wealthy Jews who lived among them: their own Christianity sat lightly upon them, as a cloak, the fashion of which might at any time be altered; theology was held in a universal disesteem, and the priesthood, taken from the lowest strata of society, were objects of pity and contempt: a widespread heresy existed, which does not appear to have had much, if anything to do with modern Protestantism, holding "erroneous views" on Baptism and the Eucharist, rejecting the Old Testament, denying the authority and necessity of the priesthood, and even repudiating, in some cases, marriage itself. It was growing rapidly not only in Switzerland and Languedoc, but also in the *Nord*, in England, and in Germany, by means of wandering bards, who scattered their new doctrines broadcast wherever they went. By local persecutions and burnings, attempts were made to stop it, but in vain; and Rome saw with consternation a province the most cultivated, the most richly endowed with genius, the most wealthy, that from which the greatest help for the Church was to be expected, a prey to free thought of the most unbridled kind.

As soon as persecution began, or even suspicion of the truth, the poets would see the necessity for veiling their thoughts under carefully-constructed allegories, and while they chanted a monotonous refrain on one of the many rules of love, secretly inculcated a code of doctrines more subversive than any the Church had yet combated. Occasionally we hear a voice which speaks aloud, and plainly enough, to let us know the kind of thing that was whispered. Thus Fauriel gives the following from Pierre Cardinal.† He is considering the insoluble problem of suffering and evil, and cries, with a boldness that has more despair than blasphemy in it—"At the Last Day

I shall say, myself, to God that He fails in His duty to His children if He thinks to destroy them and plunge them into Hell. . . . God ought to use gentleness, and to keep His souls from trespass."

Voluptuous, loose in morals, satirical, and careless as these poets were, they yet have the merit of boldly using thought, and carrying conviction to its logical and legitimate end. They anticipated the movement of the fifteenth century, without its knowledge and higher light: their penalty was extermination, thorough and complete. The land was destroyed; its cities burned; the people massacred; Pope and kings combined to make a desert, and to call it peace.

What could the Church do more? What, indeed, could she do less? For the war was a struggle for existence, and the heresies of Provence were only the most formidable in a general movement of free thought which shook the powers of Rome to its very foundations. But one thing the Church could not do. The flame of insubordination and opposition could be handed down in secret. Things that could not be attacked openly, might be attacked secretly. There were secret societies in the Middle Ages, which had a real and definite object, the danger and the terror of the Church.* And to this day Rome excommunicates the members of all secret societies, whether the mild and convivial Freemason or the bloodthirsty Fenian. The Society of Jesus is the only secret society to which a Roman Catholic may belong. Guillaume de Lorris belongs to a time when doctrine was secretly assailed; his successor, Jean de Meung, to a time when practice was openly assailed. For men very soon left off attacking their enemies by allegory, and Guillaume de Lorris, if he was indeed one of that school, was one of its last disciples.

Whether he was, or was not, can never now be satisfactorily answered. He left his poem unfinished, hardly, perhaps, begun. Whatever has to be said on the subject of its original plan must be necessarily conjectural. We incline, on the whole, to believe that he did have a religious purpose, which was not understood by Jean de Meung; that one who bears in mind the religious history of Provence as well as the character of its situation, may well construct an interpretation of the work of Guillaume de Lorris far more

* Milman's Hist. of Latin Christianity, vol. iv. p. 407.

† He died about 1308, at the age of one hundred. A selection from his satires is to be found in Raynouard's collection of Provençal literature.

* Among these the most formidable, at one time, was the great order of Knights Templars—*Ecclesia super Ecclesiam*.

probable and consistent than that of Molinet or of Marot.

Jean de Meung, so-called because he was born at the little town of Meung, in the department of Loiret —

"De Jean de Meung, s'enfe le cours de Loire."

Jean Cloupinel, Limping John, because he was lame, finding himself, some forty years later, with his head stuffed full of all the learning of his time, and nearly bursting with sentiments, convictions, and opinions, on religion, politics, social economy, and science, began, one may suppose, to cast about for some means of getting rid of his burden. Lighting on the unfinished and half-forgotten work of Guillaume de Lorris, he conceived the idea of finishing the allegory, and making it the medium of popularizing his own opinions. He could hardly have hit upon a readier plan. It was not yet a time for popular science; there were no treatises in the vernacular on history, theology, and political economy, and the only way of getting at people was by means of rhyme. But Jean de Meung was no allegorist, and no storyteller. He took up the tale, indeed, where his predecessor left it, and carried it on, it is true, but in so languid a manner, with so many digressions, turns, and twists, that what little interest was originally in it goes clean out. Nothing can well be more tedious than those brief portions devoted to the conduct of the story. It finishes, somehow. Love calls his barons together, is defeated, sends an embassy to his mother, Venus, who comes to his assistance; the fortress is taken, Bel Accueil is released, and the Rose is plucked. In the course of the poem, Malebouche gets his tongue cut out, Déduit, Doux Regard, Léese, Doux Penser, and others drop out of the allegory altogether; the Garden is forgotten; all the little careful accessories of Guillaume de Lorris, such as the arrows of Love and his commandments, are contemptuously ignored. Those that remain are changed, the Friend in the second part being very different from the Friend of the first, while *Richesse* appears with a new function. Every incident is made the peg for a digression, and every digression leads to a dozen others. The losses of the old characters are made up by the creation of new ones, and, in Faux Semblant, the hypocrite and monk, Jean de Meung anticipates Rabelais and surpasses Erasmus.

Between Guillaume de Lorris and his successor there is a great gulf hardly represented by the forty years of interval.

Men's thoughts had widely changed. The influence of the Provençal poetry was finally and completely gone, and its literature utterly fallen, to be revived after many centuries only by the scholar and the antiquarian. More than this, the thoughts and controversies of men which had turned formerly upon the foundations of the Christian faith, now turned either on special points of doctrine, or on the foundation and principles of society.

No writers, so far as we remember, have noticed the entire separation between the two parts of the romance. They are independent works. Even the allegory changes form, and the idea of the *trouvère*, Guillaume, was lost and forgotten when his successor professed to carry it on.

In passing from one to the other, the transition is like that from a clear, cold, mountain stream to a turbid river, whose waters are stained with factory refuse, and whose banks are lined with busy towns. The mystic element suddenly disappears. Away from the woodland and the mountains and among the haunts of men, it cannot live. The idea of love becomes gross and vulgar. The fair, clear voice of the poet grows thick and troubled; his gaze drops from the heavens to the earth. It is no longer a *trouvère* bent on developing a hidden meaning, and wrapping mighty secrets of religious truth in a cold and careful allegory; it is a man, eager and impetuous, alive to all the troubles and sorrows of humanity, with a supreme contempt for love, and for woman, the object of love, and a supreme carelessness for the things that occupied the mind of his predecessor. We have said that new characters were introduced. The boundaries of the old allegory were, indeed, too narrow. Jean de Meung had to build, so to speak, the walls of his own museum. It was to be a museum which should contain all knowledge of the time; to hold miscellaneous collections of facts, opinions, legends, and quotations, than which nothing can be more bewildering, nothing more unmethodical, nothing more *bizarre*.

As a poet he is superior, we think, to his predecessor, though Guillaume de Lorris can only be reckoned as a second-rate versifier. He is diffuse, apt to repeat himself, generally monotonous, and sometimes obscure. His imagination is less vivid, and his style less clear, than those of Guillaume de Lorris. Occasionally, however, passages of beauty occur. The following, for example, diffuse as it is, appears to us to possess some of the elements of real poetry. The poet is describing a tempest fol-

lowed by fair weather. Nature weeps at the wrath of the winds:—

"The air itself, in truth, appears
To weep for this in flooded tears.
The clouds such tender pity take,
Their very clothing they forsake:
And for the sorrow that they bear,
Put off the ornaments they wear.

"So much they mourn, so much they weep,
Their grief and sorrow are so deep,
They make the rivers overflow,
And war against the meadows low:
Then is the season's promise crossed;
The bread made dear, the harvest lost,
And honest poor who live thereby.
Mourn hopes that only rose to die.

"But when the end arrives at last,
And fair times come, and bad are passed;
When from the sky, displeased and pale,
Fair weather robs its rain and hail,
And when the clouds perceive once more
The thunder gone, the tempest o'er—
Then they rejoice, too, as they may,
And to be comely, bright, and gay,
Put on their glorious robes anew,
Varied with every pleasant hue;
They hang their fleeces out to dry,
Carding and combing as they fly;
Then take to spinning, and their thread
Abroad through all the heavens spread,
With needles white and long, as though
Their feathery gauntlets they would sew—
Harness their steeds, and mount and fly
O'er valleys deep and mountains high."

It is needless, after what has been said, to pursue any further the story of the romance. There is not much lost by this omission, because the work has really little or nothing to do with the allegory, and might simply be called, "The Opinions of Jean de Meung." Our object is to show what actually were the opinions of a scholar of liberal views in the thirteenth century.

They may be divided into four classes, foremost of which, in his own mind, stands his hatred of monks. In religion he was not an infidel, or even a heretic; he was simply in opposition. He writes, not against sacerdotalism, but against the inversion of recognized order by the vagabond friars. Order, indeed, he would insist upon as strenuously as Hooker himself; but order he would subordinate to what he deems the most essential thing, personal holiness. To decry, deride, and hurl contempt on the monastic orders: to put into the strongest possible words the inarticulate popular hatred of these was, we believe, his leading thought when he began his book.

His second idea was to make an angry,

almost furious protest against the extravagant respect paid to women, and an onslaught on their follies and vices. It is very curious, and shows how little he was trammelled by his allegory, that he fails altogether to see how entirely out of place is such an attack in the "Romance of the Rose."

He had two other principal ideas: one to communicate in the common tongue as much science as the world could boast; and the other, to circulate certain principles of vague socialism and hesitating republicanism which were then beginning to take the place of those religious speculations which occupied men's minds in the early part of the century.

Jean de Meung's was not the only book of the time which aimed at being an encyclopædia, but it was by far the best known and the most widely *répandu*. There were written towards the close of the thirteenth century certain collections called *trésors*, which were designed to contain everything that was to be learned, *quicquid scibile*, in mathematics, physics, astronomy, alchemy, music, speculative philosophy, and theology. They were generally in verse; one of the best of them being by a monk, called "Mainfroi," which professedly contained the Arabic learning, borrowed from the Moors in Spain. Probably Jean de Meung had access to this. Readers of old English literature will also remember that dreariest of dreary books, Gower's "Confessio Amantis," into which the hapless student plunges without hope, and emerges without profit, having found nothing but vapid imitation, monotonous repetition, and somnolent platitudes. The "Confessio" is a *trésor*, and designed to contain all the science of the time. It is adapted, so far as the science goes, from a *trésor* called the *Secretum Secretorum*.

Let us, then, gather some of the opinions of our author, classifying them according to this fourfold division. It may be premised that the division was not thought of by the poet, from whom, indeed, sequence and method are not to be expected.

Liberal thought, in the time of Jean de Meung, did not attack the domain of doctrine, partly, perhaps, from an unwillingness to meet the probable consequences of a charge of heresy; indeed, when doctrine came in its way, it seems to have leaned in the direction of orthodoxy. Thus we find Jean de Meung siding with Guillaume de St. Amour in an attack on the "Eternal Gospel," that most extraordinary book, ascribed to Joachim, Abbot

of Flora,* which was intended to have the same relation to Christianity which Christianity bears to Judaism, to be at once its fulfilment and its abolition, which was to inaugurate the third and last, the perfect age, that of the Holy Spirit. The mendicants, an ignorant, credulous body, quite incapable of appreciating cause or consequence of teaching, espoused the cause of the book; Guillaume de St. Amour arraigned them, not only of the ordinary vices attributed to them—vices entirely contrary to their vows—but as preachers of doctrines pernicious, false, and heretical. Probably Jean de Meung was actuated by *esprit de corps*, Guillaume de St. Amour being a champion of the University of Paris, as well as by hatred to the monks, and, in spite of his hard words, was not moved strongly by any specially inimical feeling towards the book. Following the instincts of his time, however, he flatly ascribes its authorship to the Devil, the alleged author of so many theological books. Partizanship in those days, as in ours, meant, to be effective, a good, sound, honest hatred, and much command of language. In his description of hell, Jean anticipates the realistic horrors of Dante.

"What guerdon," he asks, "can the wicked man look for, save the cord which will hang him to the dolorous gibbet of hell? There will he be riveted with everlasting fetters before the prince of devils; there will he be boiled in cauldrons; roasted before and behind; set to revolve, like Ixion, on cutting wheels turned by the paws of devils; tormented with hunger and thirst, and mocked with fruit and water, like Tantalus, or set to roll stones for ever up hill, like Sisyphus."

One thing seems here worthy of remark. The place of punishment for the wicked man, in the Middle Ages, was the torture-chamber of their own criminal courts, intensified by imagination. Their punishment was through the senses. Of mental agony they had no conception. Yet, strangely enough, their heaven *was never a heaven of the senses*; and it shows how deeply they were penetrated with the feeling of Christ's holiness, that while every temptation seemed set to make the mass believe in a paradise like that of Mahomet, the heaven of Christendom has always offered, as its chief charm, the worship and praise of a present God. "There, by the fountain of mercy," says Jean de Meung, "shall ye sit."

"There shall ye taste that spring so fair;
(Bright are its waters, pure and clear),

* See *Révue des Deux Mondes*, 1896, vol. 64.

And never more from death shall shrink,
If only of that fount you drink.
But ever still, untired, prolong
The days with worship, praise, and song."

The poet reserves, however, his chief strength and the main exposition of his views for his character of Faux Semblant—False seeming—the hypocrite. There is dramatic art of the very highest kind in the way in which Faux Semblant draws and develops his own character, pronounces, as it were, the apology of hypocrisy. His painting of the vices of the mendicant orders cannot approach those of Walter de Mapes, of Erasmus, and of Buchanan, in savage ferocity; but it is more satirical and more subtly venomous than any of those, and has the additional bitterness that it is spoken as from *within* the body which he attacks. The others, standing *outside* the monastic orders, point the finger of scorn at them. Jean de Meung makes one of themselves, an unblushing priest, with a candour which almost belongs to an approving conscience, with a chuckling self-complacency and an entire unconsciousness of the contrast between his life and his profession, which rises to the very first order of satirical writing, depict his own life, and take credit for villainies which he takes care to inform us are common to his order. He has been compared with Friar John; but the animalism and lusty vigour of this holy man lead him to a life of jovial sensuality through sheer ignorance; whereas Faux Semblant, his conscience seared with a hot iron, sins against the light. We may compare, too, the attacks made by Jean de Meung's contemporaries and immediate successors. They never even attempt satire.† It was an instrument whose use they could not comprehend. Their line is invective, as when Rutebeuf says, in his straightforward way—

"Papelart et Beguin,
Ont le siècle honi."

* Cf. also Richard of Hampole—
"Ther is lyf withoute ony deth,

Ae yatte the most sovereign joye of alle
Is the sight of Goddes bright face,
In whom resteth alle manere grace."

† It may be objected that "La Bible Guyot" was a satire on the times. But this curious book is, so far as it deals with the Church, a querulous complaint of certain indignities and privations suffered by the author, chiefly in the way of eating and drinking. "The Abbot," he says, "gets the meat and the clear wine; the monks get beans and muddy wine. And they are obliged to be roaring and bellowing all night long, so that they can get no sleep." A monk, whose chief complaint is the frequency of church services and the rigorous mortification of the flesh, can hardly be called a satirist.

or, as Eustache Deschamps attacks the pluralists—

“ Prestres et clers qui tenez vos monciaulx
De chapelles, vous autres curiaulx,
Des povres clers ayez compassion :
Repartez leur ces biens ecclesiaulx,
Afin que Dieu vous soit propiciaulx :
Vous les tenez à vo dampnacion ”

Faux Semblant, in his sermon, or address, a small part only of which we consider, begins by telling his hearers that he lives, by preference, in obscurity, and may, therefore, chiefly be found where this is most readily obtained, viz., under a religious habit. With the habit, however, he does not put on the reality of religion. He attaches himself to powerful patrons; he goes about preaching poverty, but living on the best of everything; nothing can be more contrary to his experience than that religion is to be found at all under the robe of a monk; nor does it follow that men and women lead bad lives because they wear a worldly garb; very many, indeed, of the saints have been married, were parents of children, and men and women of the world.

He tells how he changes his habit from time to time; how, out of the religious life, he “takes the grain and leaves the straw;” how he hears confessions and grants absolution, as well as any parish priest; but how, unlike the parish priest, he will hear the confessions only of the rich who can afford to pay; “let me have the fat sheep, and the pastors shall have the lean.” So with the poor; he will not help any.

“ Let dying beggars cry for aid,
Naked and cold on dunghill laid :
There stands the hospital, with door
Wide open to receive the poor.
Thither let all who please repair,
For help nor money can I spare:
No use for me to save their life :
What can he give who sucks his knife ? ”

Now, with the rich it is different; and the mendicant, while he takes the alms of those whose sins he has heard, may glow with conscious virtue, reflecting that the rich are much more exposed to temptation, and therefore, as a rule more grievously weighed down with a sense of guilt than the poor. When relief can be given, surely it should first be bestowed on those who need it most.

Mendicancy, Faux Semblant acknowledges with an engaging candour, is only right when a man has not learned and cannot learn a trade. Monks, according to the teaching of Saint Augustine, ought to

earn their bread by labour, and when we are commanded to give all to the poor, it is not meant that we should take it back by begging, but that we should work for our living. But the world, neglecting this among other wholesome rules, has set itself to rob, plunder, and despoil, every man trying to get whatever he can from his neighbour. As for himself, his business, and that of his brethren, is to rob the robber: to spoil the spoiler.

The mendicants keep up their own power by union; if a man does one of them an injury, they all conspire to effect his ruin: if one hates, all hate: if one is refused, all are refused, and revenge is taken: if any man is conspicuous for good deeds, they claim him as their own disciple, and in order to get the praise of people and inspire confidence, they ask, wherever they go, for letters which may testify to their virtue, and make people believe that all goodness abounds in them.

He says that he leaves others to retire into hermitages and caves, preferring to be called the Antichrist of robbers and hypocrites: he proclaims himself a cheat, a rogue, a liar, and a thief: he boasts that his father, Treachery, and himself rule in every realm, and that in the security of a religious disguise, where no one is likely to suspect him, he contrives various means to charm and deceive the world. Set forth in this bold fashion, the discourse of Faux Semblant loses all its dramatic force. It is fair, however, to state that this is chiefly found in detached passages, and that the sermon is entirely spoiled by the many digressions, notably that on the “Eternal Gospel,” which are found in it. Chaucer’s rendering of this portion appears to us to be far less happy than the rest of his work.

Another long and very curious dissertation, into which there is no space here to enter, is that on Predestination, where he arrives at the conclusion that the doctrine must be accepted as a dogma in Christian faith, but that it need not affect the Christian life—

“ For every man, except a fool,
May guide himself by virtue’s rule.”

A conclusion which seems almost to anticipate the conclusion arrived at in the Article of the Church of England.

The sum of Jean de Meung’s religious teaching is to be found in the sermon of Genius—

“ And Lords and Ladies, this be sure,
That those who live good lives and pure;

Nor from their work and duty shrink,
Shall of this fountain freely drink.

To honour Nature never rest,
By labour is she honoured best;
If other's goods are in your hands,
Restore them all — so God commands.
From murder let all men abstain;
Spotless keep hands, and mouth keep clean.
Be loyal and compassionate,
So shall ye pass the heavenly gate."

The one thing insisted on by Jean de Meung is the absolute necessity of a pure life. A profound sense of the beauty of a pure life is, indeed, the keynote to all mediæval heresies and religious excitements.* The uncleanness of the clergy was the most terrible weapon wielded by the heresiarchs. Thus, Peter de Brueys compelled monks to marry. Henry the Deacon taught that the Church could exist without priests. Tanchelin of Antwerp held that the validity of the sacraments depended on the holiness of him who administered them. Peter Waldo sent out his disciples two by two, to preach the subversive doctrine that every virtuous man was his own priest; while the *Cathari* went gladly to the stake in defence of their principle that absolute personal purity was the one thing acceptable to God. The more ignorant the age, the wilder is religious speculation; but in the most ignorant ages, there rises up from time to time a figure with a spiritual insight far beyond that of more learned times. Protestantism in its noblest form has found nothing more sublime than this conception of a Church where every good man is a priest; and there is nothing in the history of religious thought more saddening than these efforts of the people, ever hopeless, ever renewed, to protest against dogma, creed, perfunctory and vicarious religion, and to proclaim a religion of personal holiness alone.

Let us turn to the second division. We find the book teeming with a misogyny, bitter enough to make us believe that there must have been some personal cause for it. "What is love?" he asks. "It is a *maladie de pensée* — the dream of a sick fancy. . . .

* It was, among others, the cause of that most singular movement, the Crusade of Children. Friar Nicholas preached that by reason of the rapacity and lust of the soldiers, the Holy Land would never be conquered, but that, were the children to invade it, the arms of the infidels would drop powerless from their hands. Acting on this belief, hundreds of children started from Germany and France, in the belief that the Mediterranean would be dried up for them to pass. Seven shiploads were kidnapped and sold for slaves in Alexandria, several thousands perished; only a few found their way back. The story is told by M. Capéfigue in a note to Michault's "Histoire des Crusades."

There is a far higher and nobler thing in the friendship of men." And it is after narrating the stories of "Penelope" and "Lucretia," that he puts into the mouth of Jealousy the famous couplet —

"Toutes estes, serez, ou fustes,
De faict ou de volenté, putes."

Of course it may be argued that these are the words of jealousy, and not of the poet; but, unfortunately, there are so many indications of the author's entire approval of the sentiment, that the plea is hardly worth much. Take, for instance, the dramatic scene, when the wife worms out her husband's secret; or that of the old woman's lesson to Bel Accueil, where, as in the case of Faux Semblant, he puts woman's condemnation in her own mouth. She teaches him the art of love almost in Ovid's own words; she prefaces her lesson by a lament over the past days of youth and beauty; her regrets are not for a life of sin and deceit, but for the past bad days that can come no more. She is steeped in wickedness and intrigue; she can see no happiness, except in love and luxury.

"My days of gladness are no more;
Your joyous time is all before;
Hardly can I, through age and pain,
With staff and crutch, my knees sustain.
Almost a child, you hardly know
What things you have to bear and do.
Yet, well I wot, the torch that all
Burns soon or late, on you will fall;
And in that fount where Venus brings
Her maidens, will you drench love's wings.
But ere you headlong enter, pause,
Listen to one who knows Love's laws.
Perilous are its waters clear;
He risks his life who plunges here
Without a guide. Who follows me
Safe and successful shall he be.

She tells of her vanished youth and all the pleasant follies of her young days; how she threw away her affections on a scoundrel, who only robbed and ill-treated her; how she wasted her money and neglected her chances; how she grew old, and her old friends ceased to knock at her door.

"But ah! my child, no one can know
Save him who feels the bitter woe,
What grief and dolour me befell
At losing what I loved so well
The honeyed words, the soft caress,
The sweet delight, the sweet embrace;
The kisses sweet — so quickly sped,
The joyous time so quickly fled.
Fled! and I left alone to mourn.
Fled! never, never to return."

The whole passage is full of the truest touches of nature, and is written with a

nerve quite extraordinary. Villon has imitated it in his ballad of the *Belle Heaulmière*,—

"Avis m'est que j'oy regretter
La belle qui fust Heaulmière;
Soy jeune fille souhaïter
Et parler en ceste manière.

Qu'est devenu ce front poly,
Ces cheveux blonds, sourcils voutiz,
Grant entr'œil, le regard joly,
Dont prenoye les plus subtils;
Ce beau nez ni grand ni petit;
Ces petites jointes oreilles;
Menton fourchu, cler vis, traictiz
Et ces belles lèvres vermeilles?"

And Béranger sings in the same key,—

"Combien je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le temps perdu."

Jean de Meung's old woman is no more reformed than her successors. And she tells Bel Accueil all that Ovid had to impart.

It is quite possible that in putting an imitation of the "Art of Love" into the old woman's mouth, Jean de Meung catered to the lowest tastes of the age, and courted a popularity from this part of his work which he might not have obtained from the rest. The same sort of defence—no defence at all, but another and a worse charge—has been set up in the cases of Rabelais and Swift. All such offenders, we are told, deferred to popular opinion, and wrote what they inwardly disapproved. This surely is worse. To be yourself so far depraved as to take delight in things impure is bad; to deliberately lay yourself out to please others with things impure is surely infinitely more wicked. It is possible that Jean de Meung, Rabelais, and Swift, did this; but we do not think it probable. In the case of the poet whom we are now considering, there seems every reason to believe that he had formed the lowest possible ideas of love and women; that from the depths of a corrupted morality, which permitted him the same pleasure in impurity which the common herd of the vulgar and illiterate shared, he had eager yearnings for that purity of life which alone as he felt and preached, could bring one to taste of the heavenly spring. That a man could at the same time grovel so low and look so high, that his gaze upwards was so clear and bright, while his eyes were so often turned earthward, is a singular phenomenon; but it is not a solitary one. Other great men have been as

degraded as they were exalted. Perhaps when Christians and her children saw that vision of the man with the muck-rake, while the angel, unregarded, held the crown of glory over his head, had they looked much longer, they might have seen him drop his rake and gaze upwards, with streaming eyes, upon the proffered glory. Jean de Meung was the man with the muck-rake who sometimes looked upwards.

The poet feels it necessary to apologize for his severity against the sex. "If," he says, "you see anything here against womankind, blame not the poet."

"All this was for instruction writ,
Here are no words of idle wit.
No jealousy inspired the song;
No hatred bears the lines along,
Bad are their hearts, if such there live,
Who villainie to women give.
Only, if aught your sense offend,
Think that to know yourself is good,
And that, with this intent, your friend,
I write what else might seem too rude."

He thinks it right, too, to make a sort of apology for the severity of his attack on monks.

"I strung my bow : I bent it well;
And though no saint, the truth to tell,
I let my random arrows fly,
In lowly town and cloister high.
For what cared I where'er they lit?
The folk that Christ called hypocrite,
Who here and there are always found,
Who keep their Lent the whole year round,

But feed on live men's flesh the while
With teeth of envy and of guile,
These were my mark; no other aim
Was mine except to blot their fame."

Let us pass to what is perhaps the most curious part of the book, and the richest for the student of mediæval ideas, that in which he gives us his views on the growth and principles of society. Here are advanced theories of an audacity and apparent originality which make one curious to know how far they penetrated into the lower strata of France; whether they were the speculations of a dreamer, or the tenets of a school; whether there was any connection—it is more than possible—between this kind of teaching and the frantic revolt of the peasantry; whether, in fact, Jean de Meung was a prophet with a following, or a visionary without disciples. Read, for instance, his account, somewhat abridged, of the Golden Age:—

"Once on a time, in those old years,
When lived our grandsires and forbears,

(Writers, by whom the tale we know,
And ancient legends, tell us so),
Love was loyal, and true, and good;
The folk was simple; the fare was rude;
They gathered the berries in forest and mead:
For all their meat and all their bread;
They wandered by valley and plain and
mountain,
By river and forest and woodland fountain,
Plucking the chestnuts and sweet wild fruits,
Looking for acorns and rustic roots.
They rubbed together the ears of wheat;
They gathered the clustering grape to eat;
Rich fare they made when the forest bees
Filled with honey the hollow trees:
Water their drink; and the strong red wine
Was not yet pressed from the autumn vine.

"When sleep came with the shades of night,
They spread no beds of down so light,
But stretched in their cabins on piles of hay,
Fresh gathered grass and leaves they lay.
Or slept without — when the air was mild —
And summer winds were hushed and stilled;
When birds in the early morning grey
Awoke to welcome, each in his way,
The dawn that makes all hearts so gay.
In that glad time when the royal pair,
Flora — Queen of the flowers fair —
And Zephyr, her mate, give timely birth
To flowers of spring, through all the earth.

"such splendour give
That you might think the world would strive
With Heaven itself for glory — so bright,
So fair, so proud, with its flowers bedight.
Then in the woods they lay at ease,
Over their heads the branching trees —
Lovers kissed, who lovers were,
And kissed again, and had no fear —
Then they chaunted rounds and lays,
Joyously led their sports and plays:
A simple folk; they had no prayer —
No fond ambition — nor other care
Than just to live a life of joy —
And loyal love without annoy.
No king or prince was with them yet
To plunder and wrong, to ravish and fret;
There were no rich, there were no poor,
For no man yet kept his own store:
And well the saying old they knew —
(Wise it is, and is proven true)
Love and Lordship are two — not one:
They cannot abide together, nor mate:
Who wishes to join them is undone,
And who would unite will separate."

Or, as Dryden, who certainly never read
the "Romance of the Rose," unless per-
haps in Marot's edition, says: —

"Love either finds equality, or makes it."

The end of the Golden Age — a thing
not generally known — was accelerated by
Jason's voyage, the hero bringing home
with him treasures from *Outremer*: people
LIVING AGE. VOL. XXV. 1192

begin to get ideas of property: they
amass wealth: they rob and fight for
plunder: they go so far as to *divide the*
land. "La propriété," says Proudhon,
"c'est le vol."

"Even the ground they parcelled out,
And placed the landmarks all about;
And over these, whene'er they met,
Fierce battle raged. What they could get,
They seized and snatched; and everywhere
The strongest got the biggest share.

So that at length, of plunder tired,
Needs must a guardian should be hired.

A sturdy peasant chose they then,
The mightiest of the sons of men;
Strongest in battle or in ring,
And him they chose to be their king."

Voltaire has exactly the same idea

"Le premier roi fut un soldat heureux."

This is the origin of royalty. The growth
of feudalism, of armies, taxation, and di-
vision into classes is carefully traced from
these small beginnings.

But he deduces the great law of charity
and love for our neighbours. Having
this, we have everything; and wanting
this, we get wars, tyranny, and all the
miseries of the world.

What is the nature of true gentility?
Lineage, he explains, has nothing to do
with it. None are gentle but those whose
virtues make them so. Ancestors may
leave their wealth behind them, but not
the qualities that made them great. Clerks
have an advantage over unlettered persons
in knowing what is right. If they are
coarse and rude, they sin against greater
light, and incur heavier punishment.

"Let him, who gentleman would be,
From sloth and idleness keep free;
In arms and study be employed,
And coarse rusticity avoid.
Let him, with humble, courteous grace,
Meet every class in every place;
Honour all women, wife or maid,
So that not too much trust be laid
In woman's faith. So may he steer,
Of this great danger wholly clear.

Know all, that gentle blood may bring
No benefit, or any thing,
Except what each man's worth may give.
Know, also, none of all that live
Can ask for honour, praise, or blame
By reason of another's name."

The idea, of course, is not new. It is
found frequently enough in the Greek and
Latin literature. It occurs, we believe, for

the first time in the fragments of Epicharmus, —

ἀγαθὸς δ' ἄνθρωπος
καὶ Ἀδελφὸς καὶ δούλος, εὐγενὴς ἔφυ.

and afterwards it is found in Euripides, Horace, Juvenal — "Stemmata quid faciunt?" — and lastly, in Seneca. Doubtless, Jean de Meung took it from Seneca. Once started anew, the idea, of course, became popular, and poet after poet repeated it, until it became a mere commonplace. But so far as we have been able to discover Jean de Meung gave it new life.

A few words only, for our limits press, on the natural science taught in the "Romance of the Rose." The poet, having got rid of this indignation and wrath that lay at his soul against the mendicant friars, and the vices of women, wishes now, it seems, to sit down for a quiet and comfortable disquisition on universal knowledge, including alchemy, in which he is a firm believer; indeed, he wants to pass, in a certain ballad of his, for an adept. This part takes the form of a confession of Nature to her chaplain Genius (in which Power afterwards copies him). The confession is long and wearisome, but it is curious as being the earliest and fullest popular account of mediæval science.

He fancies nature to be perpetually at work, fashioning creatures whom Death continually tries to destroy.

"Nature, who fashions all that holds
The sky beneath its ample folds,
Within her forge meanwhile was found,
And at her work's eternal round, —
Struck out new forms of every race,
Lest life should fail, and types should cease;
She made so many, that Death, who tolled
With heavy mace to kill, was foiled.

They fly to save themselves, where'er
Their fate may lead or feet may bear;
Some to the Church and convent rule,
Some to the dance, some to the school;
Some to their merchandise are turned,
Some to the arts which they have learned.

Another, sworn by Holy Writ,
Puts on the cloak of hypocrite;
And, flying, would his thoughts conceal,
Did not his life the truth reveal.
So, shunning Death, do all men shape
Their diverse ways, his blows to 'scape."

The scientific discourse follows: observe the good sense of many of his remarks: —

"God, having made the world out of nothing, having put all things into their proper places, measured spaces, and allotted courses, handed all over to Nature as his *chambrière*.

Whatever man can do — and his power is very great — he cannot equal Nature, the inexhaustible and untiring. By alchemy he can interchange metals; can restore its pristine purity to everything; can turn quicksilver into gold by subtle medicines; but he cannot change or create species. This Nature alone is able to effect, changing the complexions of things, so that they assume new forms and become new substances; as when in thunderstorms, stones fall from the clouds, where no stones ever were.

"The heavens turn every day, bearing with them the stars. They go round from east to west, rejoicing the world. A complete revolution is made every 26,000 years.

"The moon is different from the planets in being obscure in some places and clear in others. The reason of this is, that the sun can penetrate through one part of it, as through glass; the dark part, on which is figured a serpent having a tree on his back, reflecting the rays.

"In the centre is the sun, like a king. He it is who makes the stars so bright that they serve as lamps of the night; were we nearer to the sun we should be scorched; were we farther away we should be frozen.

"The comets are not attached to the heavens, but fly about in the air. They do not last long, and it is a mistake to suppose that they portend disaster. For there is no man of worth or power sufficient for the heavens to take notice of him.

Nor any prince of so great worth,
That signs from heaven should give to earth,
Notice of death for him alone:
Nor is his body — life once gone —
Worth one jot more than simple squire,
Or clerk, or one who works for hire.

"Foolish people imagine, too, that stars fall like flying dragons from the skies; and that eclipses are to be taken as portents. Now, no one would be astonished at these things who understood the causes of things.

"Every student ought to acquire a knowledge of optics, which can be learned by the aid of geometry, from the books of Aristotle, Alhacen, and Hucayen. Here can be learned the properties of mirrors; how they produce things which appear miracles; make small things seem great — a grain of sand like a mountain; and great things small — a mountain like a grain of sand; how glasses can be used to burn things; how straight lines can be made to look crooked, round things oblong, upright things reversed; and phantoms which do not exist appear to be moving about."

The book from beginning to end is as full of quotations as Burton. The author quotes from Aristotle, Justinian, Horace, Seneca, St. Augustine, Ovid, Cicero, Boethius, Lucan, Claudian, Suetonius, and he has, probably through Cicero, some knowledge of Plato, but all this in the wildest jumble, with no discrimination and no critical power what-

ever. His range of reading was not by any means contemptible, and though we know of no writer of his time who can compare with him in this respect, it is evident that since one man had command of so many books, other men must have enjoyed the same advantages. There is reason to believe from Jean de Meung alone that acquaintance with Latin literature was much more extended than is generally thought, and that the scholarship of the time was by no means wholly confined to scholastic disputation.

Such, roughly sketched, is the work of Jean de Meung, from which we have plucked some of the fruits that come readiest to our hand. If not altogether an original or a profound thinker, he has at least the merit of fearlessness. He taught the folk, in the most popular way possible, great and valuable lessons. He told them that religion is a thing apart from, and independent of, religious profession; that "*la robe ne fait pas le moine*;" he says that most of the saints, men and women, were decent married people, that marriage is a laudable and holy custom, that the wealth of monks is a mockery of their profession and a perjury of their vows, that learned persons ought to set an example, and what is sheer ignorance and brutality in others is rank sin with them; he attacks superstition, showing that all phenomena have natural causes, and have nothing to do with earthly events and the fortunes of men, because men are equal in the sight of God; and he teaches in terms as clear as any used by Carlyle, that labour is noble, and in accordance with the conditions of our being—that man's welfare is the end and aim of all earthly provision.

All this in what used to be called the Dark Ages. After six hundred years, the same questions exercise us which exercised Jean de Meung. We are still disputing as to whether true nobility is inherited or not; we have not all made up our minds about the holiness of marriage; we still think the clergyman, because he wears a surplice, holier than other men; work has been quite recently and with much solemnity, pronounced noble by a prophet who forgot, while he was about it, to call it also respectable; men yet live who look upon scientific men with horror and quote with fine infelicity, a text of St. Paul's about "science falsely so called;" while the lesson of personal holiness has to be preached again and again, and is generally forgotten in the war over vestments and creeds.

Jean de Meung wished, as it seems to us, to write a book for the people, to answer their questions, to warn them of dangers before them, to instruct their ignorance. On the sapless trunk of a dying and passionless allegory he grafts a living branch which shall bear fruit in the years to come. His poem breathes indeed. Its pulses beat with a warm human life. Its sympathies are with all mankind. The poet has a tear for the poor naked beggars dying on dung-heaps and in the Hôtel-Dieu, and a lash of scorpions for the Levite who goes by on the other side; he teaches the loveliness of friendship; he catches the wordless complaint of the poor, and gives it utterance: he speaks with a scorn which Voltaire only has equalled, and a revolutionary fearlessness surpassing that of D'Alembert or Diderot.

And much more than this. It seems to us that his book—absolutely the only cheerful book of the time—afforded hope that things were not permanent: evil times may change; times have not been always evil; there was once a Golden Age; the troubles of the present are due, not to the innate badness of Nature and the universal unfitness of things, but to certain definite and ascertainable causes. Now, to discover the cause is to go some way towards curing the disease.

In that uneasy time, strange questions and doubts perplexed men's minds—questions of religion and politics, affecting the very foundations of society. They asked themselves *why* things were so; and looking about in the dim twilight of dawning knowledge, they could find as yet no answer. There was no rest in the Church or in the State, and the mind of France—which was the mind of Europe—was gravitating to a social and religious democracy. An hour before the dawn, you may hear the birds in the forest twitter in their sleep: they dream of the day. Europe, at the close of the thirteenth century, was dreaming of the glorious Renaissance, the dawn of the second great day of civilization. Jean de Meung answered the questions of the times with a clearness and accuracy which satisfied, if it did not entirely explain. Five generations passed away before the full burst of light, and he taught them all, with that geniality that is his greatest charm. His book lasted because, confused and without art as it is, it is full of life and cheerfulness and hope. Not one of the poets of his own time has his lightness of heart: despondency and dejection weigh down every one: they alternate between a mo-

notonous song to a mistress, or a complaint for France; and to Jean de Meung they are as the wood-pigeon to the nightingale. They all borrowed from him, or studied him. Charles of Orleans, Villon, Clement Marot, Rabelais, La Fontaine, Regnier, Molière, Béranger, all come down from him in direct line, his literary children and grandchildren. And in Jean de Meung, to make an end, is the first manifestation of the true spirit of French literature — the *esprit Gaulois* — the legacy, they tell us, of the ancient Gaul.

From Macmillan's Magazine.
THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A
PHAETON.

BY WILLIAM BLACK, AUTHOR OF "A DAUGHTER OF HETH," ETC.

REALLY, Bridgenorth was pleasant enough on this bright morning albeit the streets on the river-side part of the town were distinctly narrow, dirty, and smoky. First of all, however, we visited the crumbling walls of Robert de Belesme's mighty tower. Then we took the women round the high promenade over the valley. Then we went down through a curious and precipitous passage hewn out of the sandstone hill to the lower part of the town, and visited the old building in which Bishop Percy was born, the inscription * on which, by the way, is a standing testimony to the playful manner in which this nation has from time immemorial dealt with its aspirates. Then we clambered up the steep streets again until we reached the great central square, with its quaint town-house and old-fashioned shops. A few minutes thereafter we were in the phaeton; and Castor and Pollux taking us into the open country again.

"Mademoiselle!" said the Lieutenant — the young man was like a mavis, with this desire of his to sing or hear singing just after his morning meal — "you have not sung to us anything for a long while now."

"But I will this morning, with great pleasure," said Bell.

"Then," said Von Rosen, "here is your guitar. When I saw you come down to go out this morning, I said to myself,

* The inscription inside the door of this old-fashioned building, which is ornamented by bars of black and white, and peaked gables, is as follows: —

"Except the Lord BUILT THE OWSE
The Labourers thereof eall nothing
Erected by R For * 1580."

"Mademoiselle is sure to sing to-day." So I kept out the guitar-case."

The horses pricked up their ears. The cords of the guitar twanged out a few notes. The fresh breeze blew by from the fields; and as we drove through the stillness of one or two straggling woods, Bell sang —

"If enemies oppose us,
And England is at war
With any foreign nation,
We fear not wound nor scar!
To humble them, come on, lads!
Their flags we'll soon lay low;
Clear the way, for the fray:
Though the stormy winds do blow!"

"Mademoiselle," cries the Lieutenant, "it is a challenge."

Bell laughed, and suddenly altered the key.

"Fair Hebe I left with a cautious design" —

this was what she sang now —

"To escape from her charms and to drown love
in wine;
I tried it, but found, when I came to depart,
The wine in my head, but still love in my heart."

"Well," said Tita, with an air of astonishment, "that is a pretty song for a young lady to sing!"

Bell laid down the guitar.

"And what," I ask of Queen Titania, "are the sentiments of which alone a young lady may sing? Not patriotism? Not love? Not despair? Goodness gracious! Don't you remember what old Joe Blatchers said when he brought us word that some woman in his neighbourhood had committed suicide?"

"What did he say?" asked the Lieutenant with a great curiosity.

"The wretched woman had drowned herself because her husband had died; and old Joe brought us the story with the serious remark, '*The ladies as their feelings, as'n't they, sir, arter all?*' Mayn't a young lady sing of anything but the joy of decorating a church on Christmas Eve?"

"I have never been taught to perceive the humour of profanity," says my Lady with a serene impassiveness.

"Curious, if true. Perhaps you were never taught that a white elephant isn't the same as a rainbow or a pack of cards?"

"My dear," says Tita, turning to Bell, "what is that French song that you brought over with you from Dieppe?"

Thus appealed to, Bell took up her guitar, and sang for us a very pretty song.

It was not exactly French, to be sure. It began —

"'Twas frost and thro' leet, wid a greyming o' snaw,

When I went to see Biddy, the flow'r o' them aw;

To meet was agreed on at Seymy' deyke nuik,
Where I sauntered wi' mony a seegh and lang luik."

But good honest Cumbrian is quite as foreign to most of us as French; and no exception could be taken to the sentiment of Bell's ballad, for none of us could understand six consecutive words of it.

Much-Wenlock is a quiet town. It is about as quiet as the spacious and grassy enclosure in which the magnificent ruins of its old monastery stand grey and black in the sunshine. There are many strange passages and courts in these noble ruins; and as you wander through broken arches, and over courtyards half hid in the long green grass, it is but natural that a preference for solitude should betray itself in one or other of the members of a noisy little party. We lost sight of Bell and the Lieutenant. There was a peacock strutting through the grass, and making his resplendent tail gleam in the sunshine; and they followed him, I think. When we came upon them again, Bell was seated on a bit of tumbled pillar, pulling daisies out of the sward and plaiting them; and the Lieutenant was standing by her side, talking to her in a low voice. It was no business of ours to interfere with this pastoral occupation. Doubtless he spoke in these low tones because of the great silence of the place. We left them there, and had another saunter before we returned. We were almost sorry to disturb them; for they made a pretty group, these two young folks, talking leisurely to each other under the solemn magnificence of the great grey ruins, while the sunlight that lit up the ivy on the walls, and threw black shadows under the arches of the crumbling windows, and lay warm on the long grass around them, touched Bell's cheek too, and glimmered down one side of the loose and splendid masses of her hair.

Castor and Pollux were not allowed much time for lunch; for, as the young people had determined to go to the theatre on reaching Shrewsbury, their elders, warned by a long experience, knew that the best preparation for going to a country theatre is to dine before setting out. My Lady did not anticipate much enjoyment; but Bell was positive we should be surprised.

"We have been out in the country so much — seeing so much of the sunlight and the green trees, and living at those little inns — that we ought to have a country theatre as well. Who knows but that we may have left all our London ideas of a play in London; and find ourselves quite delighted with the simple folk who are always uttering good sentiments, and quite enraged with the bad man who is wishing them ill. I think Count von Rosen was quite right —"

Of course Count von Rosen was quite right!

"— about commonplace things only having become commonplace through our familiarity with them," continued Miss Bell; "perhaps we may find ourselves going back a bit, and being as much impressed by a country drama as any of the farmer-folk who do not see half-a-dozen plays in their life. And then, you know, what a big background we shall have! — not the walls of the little theatre, but all the great landscape we have been coming through. Round about us we shall see the Severn, and the long woods, and Broadway Hill —"

"And not forgetting Bourton Hill," says the Lieutenant. "If only they do give us a good moonlight scene like that, we shall be satisfied."

"Oh no," said Bell gravely — she was evidently launching into one of her unconscious flights, for her eyes took no more notice of us, but were looking wistfully at the pleasant country around us — "that is asking far too much. It is easier for you to make the moonlight scene than for the manager. You have only to imagine it is there — shut your eyes a little bit, and fancy you hear the people on the stage talking in a real scene, with the real country around, and the real moonlight in the air. And then you grow to believe in the people — and you forget that they are only actors and actresses working for their salaries — and you think it is a true story, like the stories they tell up in Westmoreland of things that have happened in the villages years ago. That is one of the great pleasures of driving, is it not? — that it gives you a sense of wide space. There is a great deal of air and sky about it; and you have a pleasant and easy way of getting through it, as if you were really sailing; whereas the railway whisks you through the long intervals, and makes your journey a succession of dots. That is an unnatural way of travelling, that staccato method of —"

Here Mademoiselle caught sight of Queen Tita gravely smiling, and immedi-

ately paused to find out what she had been saying.

"Well?" she said, expecting to be corrected or reproved, and calmly resolved to bear the worst.

But how could Tita explain? She had been amused by the manner in which the young lady had unconsciously caught up a trick of the Lieutenant's in the construction of his sentences — the use of "that" as the introductory nominative, the noun coming in afterwards. For the moment the subject dropped, in the excitement of our getting once more back to the Severn, and when Bell spoke next, it was to ask the Lieutenant whether the Wrekin — a solitary, abrupt, and conical hill on our right, which was densely wooded to the top — did not in a milder form reproduce the odd masses of rock that stud the great plain west of the Lake of Constance.

A pleasant drive through a fine stretch of open country took us into Shrewsbury; and here, having got over the bridge and up the steep thoroughfares to our hotel, dinner was immediately ordered. When at length we made our way round to the theatre it was about half-past seven, and the performance was to commence at twenty minutes to eight.

"Oh, Bell!" says my Lady, as we enter the building. She looks blankly round. From the front of the dress circle we are peeping into a great hollow place, dimly lighted by ten lamps, each of one burner, that throw a sepulchral light on long rows of wooden benches, on a sad-coloured curtain and an empty orchestra. How is all the force of Bell's imagination to drive off these walls and this depressing array of carpentry, and substitute for them a stage of greensward and walls composed of the illimitable sky? There is an odour of escaped gas, and of oranges; but when did any people ever muster up enough of gaiety to eat an orange in this gloomy hall?

7.30, by Shrewsbury clock. — An old gentleman and a boy appear in the orchestra. The former is possessed of a bass-viol; the latter proceeds to tune up a violin.

7.40 — which is the time for commencing the play — three ladies come into the pit. The first is a farmer's wife, fat, ostentatious, happy in a black silk that rustles; the two others are apparently friends of hers in the town, who follow her meekly, and take their seats with a frightened air. She sits down with a proud gesture; and this causes a thin crackle of laughter and a rude remark far up in the semi-darkness

overhead, so that we gather that there are probably two persons in the upper gallery.

7.45. — Two young ladies — perhaps shop-girls, but their extreme blushing gives them a countrified look — come into the pit, talk in excited whispers to each other, and sit down with an uncomfortable air of embarrassment. At this moment the orchestra startles us by dashing into a waltz from "Faust." There are now five men and a boy in this tuneful choir. One of them starts vigorously on the cornet; but invariably fails to get beyond the first few notes, so that the flute beats him hollow. Again and again the cornet strikes in at the easy parts; but directly he subsides again, and the flute has it all his own way. The music ceases. The curtain is drawn up. The play has begun.

The first act is introductory. There is a farmer, whose chief business it is to announce that "his will is law;" and he has a son, addressed throughout as Weelyam, whom he wishes to marry a particular girl. The son, of course, has married another. The villain appears, and takes us into his confidence; giving us to understand that a worse villain never trod the earth. He has an interview with the farmer; but this is suddenly broken off — a whistle in some part of the theatre is heard, and we are conveyed to an Italian lake, all shining with yellow villas and blue skies.

"That is the problem stated," said the Lieutenant; "now we shall have the solution. But do you find the walls going away yet, Mademoiselle?"

"I think it is very amusing," said Bell, with a bright look on her face. Indeed, if she had not brought in with her sufficient influence from the country to resolve the theatre into thin air, she had imbibed a vast quantity of good health and spirits there, so that she was prepared to enjoy anything.

The plot thickens. The woman-villain appears — a lady dressed in deep black, who tells us in an awful voice that she was the mistress of Weelyam in France — that being the country naturally associated in the mind of the dramatist with crimes of this character. She is in a pretty state when she learns that Weelyam is married; and events are plainly marching on to a crisis. It comes. The marriage is revealed to the farmer, who delivers a telling curse, which is apparently launched at the upper gallery, but which is really meant to confound Weelyam; then the old man falls — there is a tableau — the curtain comes down, and the band, by some odd

stroke of luck, plays "Home, sweet home," as an air descriptive of Weelyam's banishment.

We become objects of curiosity, now that the adventures of the farmer's son are removed. There are twenty-one people in the pit—representing conjointly a solid guinea transferred to the treasury. One or two gay young men, with canes, and their hats much on the side of their heads, have entered the dress-circle, stared for a minute or two at the stage, and retired.

They are probably familiar with rustic drama, and hold it in contempt. A good ballet now, would be more in their way, performed by a *troupe* of young ladies whose names are curiously like English names, with imposing French and Italian terminations. A gentleman comes into the pit along with a friend, nods familiarly to the attendant, deposits his friend, utters a few facetious remarks, and leaves: can it be that he is a reporter of a local newspaper, dowered with the privilege of free admission for "himself and one?" There must at least be three persons in the upper gallery, for a new voice is heard, calling out the graceful but not unfamiliar name of "Polly." One of the two rose-red maidens in front of us timidly looks up, and is greeted with a shout of recognition and laughter. She drops into her old position in a second, and hangs down her head; while her companion protests in an indignant way in order to comfort her. The curtain rises.

The amount of villany in this Shrewsbury drama is really getting beyond a joke. We are gradually rising in the scale of dark deeds, until the third villain, who now appears, causes the previous two to be regarded as innocent lambs. This new performer of crime is a highwayman; and his very first act is to shoot Weelyam's father, and rob him of his money. But lo! the French adventuress drops from the clouds: the highwayman is her husband: she tells of her awful deeds, among them of her having murdered "her mistress the Archduchess;" and then, as she vows she will go and murder Weelyam, a tremendous conflict of everybody ensues, and a new scene being run on, we are suddenly whirled up to Balmoral Castle.

"I am beginning to be anxious about the good people," remarked Tita. "I am afraid William will be killed."

"Unless he has as many lives as Plutarch, he can't escape," said Bell.

"As for the old farmer," observed the

Lieutenant, "he survives apoplectic fits and pistol-shots very well—oh, very well indeed. He is a very good man in a play. He is sure to last to the end."

Well, we were near the end; and author, carpenter, and scene-painter had done their dead best to render the final scene impressive. It was in a cavern. Cimmerian darkness prevailed. The awful lady in black haunts the gloomy byways of the rocks, communing with herself, and twisting her arms so that the greatest agony is made visible. But what is this hooded and trembling figure that approaches? Once in the cavern, the hood is thrown off, and the palpitating heroine comes forward for a second to the low footlights, merely that there shall be no mistake about her identity. The gloom deepens. The young and innocent wife encounters the French adventuress; the woman who did not scruple to murder her mistress the Archduchess, seizes the girl by her hands—shrieks are heard—the two figures twist round one another—then a mocking shout of laughter, and Weelyam's wife is precipitated into the hideous waters of the lake! But lo! the tread of innumerable feet; from all quarters of the habitable globe stray wanderers arrive: with a shout Weelyam leaps into the lake, and when it is discovered that he has saved his wife, behold! everybody in the play is found to be around him, and with weeping and with laughter all the story is told, and the drama ends in the most triumphant and comfortable manner, in the middle of the night, in a cavern a hundred miles from anywhere.

"No," said Queen Titania, distinctly, "I will not stay to see *La Champagne Ballet* or the *Pas de Fascination*."

So there was nothing for it but to take the ungrateful creature back to the hotel, and give her tea and a novel. As for the billiard-room in that hotel, it is one of the best between Holborn and the Canongate. The Lieutenant begs to add, that he can recommend the beer.

CHAPTER XV.

"LA PATRIE EN DANGER."

"Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres,
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark."

I sit down to write this chapter with a determination to be generous, calm, and modest to the last degree. The man who would triumph over the wife of his bosom

merely to have the pleasure of saying, "I told you so," does not deserve to have his path through life sweetened by any such tender companionship. Far be it from me to recall the protestations which my Lady affixed to the first portion of this narrative on its publication. Not for worlds would I inquire into her motives for being so anxious to see Arthur go. The ways of a woman ought to be intricate, occult, perplexing, if only to preserve something of the mystery of life around her, and to serve her also as a refuge from the coarse and rude logic of the actual world. The foolish person who, to prove himself right, would drive his wife into a corner, and demonstrate to her that she was wrong—that she had been guilty of small prevarications, of trifling bits of hypocrisy, and of the use of various arts to conceal her real belief and definite purpose—the man who would thus wound the gentle spirit by his side to secure the petty gratification of proving himself to have been something of a twopenny-half-penny prophet;—but these remarks are premature at the present moment, and I go on to narrate the events which happened on the day of our leaving Shrewsbury and getting into the solitary region of the meres.

"I have received a telegram from Arthur," says Bell, calmly; and the pink sheet is lying on the breakfast-table before her.

"How did you get it?" says my Lady, with some surprise.

"At the post-office."

"Then you have been out?"

"Yes, we went for a short walk, after having waited for you," says Bell, looking down.

"Oh, Madame," says the Lieutenant, coming forward from the fireplace, "you must not go away from the town without seeing it well. It is handsome, and the tall poplars down by the side of the river, they are worth going to see by themselves."

"It was very pretty this morning," continued Bell, "when the wind was blowing about the light blue smoke, and the sun was shining down on the slates and the clumps of trees. We went to a height on the other side of the river, and I have made a sketch of it——"

"Pray," says my Lady, regarding our ward severely, "when did you go out this morning?"

"Perhaps about an hour and a half ago," replies Bell carelessly; "I don't exactly know."

"More than that, I think," says the

Lieutenant, "for I did smoke two cigars before we came back. It is much to our credit to get up so early, and not anything to be blamed of."

"I am glad Bell is improving in that respect," retorts my Lady with a wicked smile; and then she adds, "Well?"

"He has started," is the reply to that question.

"And is going by another route?"

"Yes; in a dog-cart—by himself. Don't you think it is very foolish of him, Tita? You know what accidents occur with those dog-carts."

"Mademoiselle, do not alarm yourself," says the Lieutenant, folding up his newspaper. It is quite true what Madame said yesterday, that there are so many accidents in driving, and so very seldom anyone hurt. You ask your friends—yes, they have all had accidents in their riding and driving; they have all been in great danger, but what have they suffered?—Nothing! Sometimes a man is killed—yes, one out of several millions in the year. And if he tumbles over—which is likely if he does not know much of horses and driving—what then? No, there is no fear; we shall see him some day very well, and go on all together!"

"Oh, shall we?" says my Lady, evidently regarding this as a new idea.

"Certainly. Do you think he goes that way always? Impossible. He will tire of it. He will study the roads across to meet us. He will overtake us with his light little dog-cart; we shall have his company along the road."

Tita did not at all look so well satisfied with this prospect of meeting an old friend as she might have done.

"And when are you to hear from him next?" I inquire of Mademoiselle.

"He will either write or telegraph to each of the big towns along our route, on the chance of the message intercepting us somewhere; and so we shall know where he is."

"And he has really started?"

Bell placed the telegram in my hands. It was as follows:—

"Have set out by Hatfield, Huntingdon, and York, for Edinburgh. Shall follow the real old coach-road to Scotland; and am certain to find much entertainment."

"For man and beast," struck in the Lieutenant. "And I know of a friend of mine travelling in your country who went into one of these small inns, and put up his horse, and when they brought him in his luncheon to the parlour, he only looked at it and said, 'Very good, waiter; this is

very nice; but where is the entertainment for the man?"

I continued to read the telegram aloud—

"Shall probably be in Edinburgh before you; but will telegraph or write to each big town along your route, that you may let me know where you are."

"It is very obliging," says the Lieutenant, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"It is quite certain," observes my Lady, with decision, "that he must not accompany us in his dog-cart; for we shall arrive at plenty of inns where they could not possibly put up three horses and so many people."

"It would have been so," said the Lieutenant, "at the place on the top of the hill—Bourton was it called?"

The mere notion of Arthur coming in to spoil the enjoyment of that rare evening was so distressing, that we all took refuge in breakfast, after which we went for a long and leisurely stroll through Shrewsbury; and then had Castor and Pollux put into the phaeton. It seemed now to us to matter little at what town we stayed. We had almost begun to forget the various points of the journey. It was enough that some hospitable place—whether it were city, town, or hamlet—afforded us shelter for the night, that on the next morning we could issue forth again into the sweet-smelling country air, and have all the fair green world to ourselves. We looked with a lenient eye upon the great habitations of men. What if a trifle of coal-smoke hung about the house-tops, and that the streets were not quite so clean as they might be? We suffered little from these inconveniences. They only made us rejoice the more to get out into the leafy lanes, where the air was fresh with the scent of the bean-fields and the half-dried hay. And when a town happened to be picturesque—and it was our good fortune to find a considerable number of handsome cities along our line of route—and combined with its steep streets, its old-fashioned houses, and its winding river and banks, a fair proportion of elms and poplars scattered about its clumps to mar the monotony of the grey fronts and the blue slates, we paid such a tribute of admiration as could only be obtained from people who knew they would soon be emancipated from the din and clamour, the odour and the squalor, of thoroughfares and pavements.

Bell, sitting very erect, and holding the whip and reins in the most accurate and scientific fashion, was driving us leisurely

up the level and pleasant road leading from Shrewsbury to Ellesmere. The country was now more open and less hilly than that through which we had recently come. Occasionally, as in the neighbourhood of Harmer Hill, we drove by long woods; but for the most part our route lay between spacious meadows, fields and farms, with the horizon around lying blue and dark under the distant sky. The morning had gradually become overcast, and the various greens of the landscape were darkened by the placid grey overhead. There was a little wind, but a prevailing coolness that seemed to have something of premonitory moistness in it.

But how the birds sang under the silence of that cold grey sky! We seemed to hear all the sounds within a great compass, and these were exclusively the innumerable notes of various warblers—in the hedges, and in the roadside trees, far away in woods, or hidden up in the level greyness of the clouds: *Tewi, tewi, tewi, trrrr-weet!*—*droom, droom, phloee!*—*tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, feer!*—that was the silvery chorus from thousands of throats, and, under the darkness of the grey sky, the leaves of the trees and the woods seemed to hang motionless in order to listen. Now and again Bell picked out the call of a thrush or a blackbird from the almost indistinguishable mass of melody; but it seemed to us that all the fields and the hedges had but one voice, and that it was clear, and sweet, and piercing, in the strange silence reigning over the land.

So we rolled along the unfrequented road, occasionally passing a wayside tavern, a farmhouse, or a cluster of cottages, until about noon we caught a glimpse of a stretch of grey water. On this lonely mere no boat was to be seen, nor any house on its banks, merely a bit of leaden-coloured water placed amid the soft and low-lying woods. Then we caught the glimmer of another sheet of cold grey, and by and by, driving under and through an avenue of trees, we came full in sight of Ellesmere.

The small lake looked rather dismal just then. There was a slight stirring of wind on its surface, which destroyed the reflection of the woods along its shores, so that the water was pretty much the counterpart of the gloomy sky above. At this moment, too, the moisture in the air began to touch our faces, and everything portended a shower. Bell drove us past the mere and on to the small village, where Castor and Pollux were safely lodged in the stables of the "Bridgewater Arms."

We had got into shelter just in time. Down came the rain with a will; but we were unconcernedly having luncheon in a long apartment which the landlord had recently added on to his premises. Then we darted across the yard to the billiard-room, where Bell and my Lady having taken up lofty positions, in order to overlook the tournament, we proceeded to knock the balls about until the shower should cease.

The rain, however, showed no symptoms of leaving off, so we resolved to remain at Ellesmere that night, and the rest of the afternoon was spent in getting up arrears of correspondence and similar work. It was not until after dinner that it was found the rain-clouds had finally gathered themselves together, and then, when we went out for a stroll, in obedience to Bell's earnest prayer, the evening had drawn on apace.

The darkening waters of the lake were now surrounded by low clouds of white mist, that hung about the still and wet woods. From the surface of the mere, too, a faint vapour seemed to rise, so that the shores on the other side had grown dim and vague. The trees were still dropping large drops into the splashing road; runnels of water showed how heavy the rain had been; and it seemed as if the grey and ghostly plain of the lake were still stirred by the commotion of the showers. The reflection of a small yacht, out from the shore was blurred and indistinct; and underneath the wooded island beyond there only reigned a deeper gloom on the mere.

Of course, no reasonable person could have thought of going out in a boat on this damp evening; but Bell having expressed some wish of the kind, the Lieutenant forthwith declared we should soon have a boat, however late the hour. He dragged us through a wet garden to a house set amid trees by the side of the lake. He summoned a worthy woman, and overcame her wonder, and objections, and remonstrances, in about a couple of minutes. In a very short space of time we found ourselves in a massive and unwieldy punt, out in the middle of this grey sheet of water, with the chill darkness of night rapidly descending.

"We shall all have neuralgia, and rheumatism, and colds to-morrow," said my Lady, contentedly. "And all because of this mad girl, who thinks she can see ghosts wherever there is a little mist. Bell, do you remember—"

Tita stopped suddenly, and grasped my

arm. A white something had suddenly borne down upon us, and not for a second or two did we recognize the fact that it was merely a swan, bent on a mission of curiosity. Far away beyond this solitary animal there now became visible a faint line of white, and we knew that there the members of his tribe were awaiting his report.

The two long oars plashed in the silence, we glided onwards through the cold mists, and the woods of the opposite shore were now coming near. How long we floated thus, through the gloomy vapours of the lake, I cannot tell. We were bent on no particular mission; and somehow the extreme silence was grateful to us. But what was this new light that was seen to be stealing up behind the trees, a faint glow that began to tell upon the sky, and reveal to us the conformation of the clouds? The mists of the lake deepened, but the sky lightened, and we could see breaks in it, long stripes of a soft and pale yellow. The faint suffusion of yellow light seemed to lend a little warmth to the damp and chill atmosphere. Bell had not uttered a word. She had been watching this growing light with patient eyes, only turning at times to see how the island was becoming more distinct in the darkness. And then more and more rapidly the radiance spread up and over the south-east, the clouds got thinner and thinner, until all at once we saw the white glimmer of the disc of the moon leap into a long crevice in the dark sky. And lo! all the scene around us was changed; the mists were gradually dispersed and driven to the shores; the trees on the island became sharp, black bars against a flood of light; and on the dark bosom of the water lay a long lane of silver, intertwisting it-self with millions of gleaming lines, and flashing on the ripples that went quivering back from the hull of our boat. We were floating on an enchanted lake, set far away amid these solitary woods.

"Every day, I think," said Bell, "we come to something more beautiful in this journey."

"Mademoiselle," said the Lieutenant, suddenly, "your country it has been too much for me; I have resolved to come to live here always, and in five years, if I choose it, I shall be able to be naturalized, and consider England as my own country."

The moonlight was touching softly at this moment the outline of Bell's face, but the rest of the face was in shadow, and we could not see what evidence of surprise was written there.

"You are not serious," she said.

"I am."

"And you mean to give up your country because you like the scenery of another country?"

That, plainly put, was what the proposal of the Count amounted to, as he had expressed it; but even he seemed somewhat taken aback by its apparent absurdity.

"No," he said, "you must not put it all down to one reason; there are many reasons, some of them important; but at all events it is sure that if I come to live in England, I shall not be disappointed of having much pleasure in travelling."

"With you it may be different," said Bell, almost repeating what I had said the day before to the young man. "I wish we could always be travelling and meeting with such pleasant scenes as this. But this holiday is a very exceptional thing."

"So much the worse," said the Lieutenant, with the air of a man who thinks he is being hardly used by destiny.

"But tell me," broke in my Lady, as the boat lay in the path of the moonlight, almost motionless, "have you calculated the consequences of your becoming an exile?"

"An exile! there are many thousands of my countrymen in England; they do not seem to suffer much of regret because they are exiles."

"Suppose we were to go to war with Germany."

"Madame," observed the Lieutenant, seriously, "if you regard one possibility, why not another? Should I not hesitate of living in England for fear of a comet striking your country rather than Germany? No: I do not think there is any chance of either; but if there is a war, then I consider whether I am more bound to Germany or to England. And that is a question of the ties you may form, which may be more strong than merely that you chance to have been born in a particular place."

"These are not patriotic sentiments," remarks my Lady, in a voice which shows she is pleased as well as amused by the announcement of them.

"Patriotism!" he said, "that is very good—but you need not make it a fetish. Perhaps I have more right to be patriotic in a country that I choose for my own, than in a country where I am born without any choice of my own. But I do not find my countrymen when they come to England much troubled by such things; and I do not think your countrymen, when they go to America, consult the philosophers, and say what they would do in a war. If

you will allow me to differ with you, Madame, I do not think that is a great objection to my living in England."

An objection—coming from her! The honest Lieutenant meant no sarcasm; but if a blush remained in my Lady's system—which is pretty well trained, I admit, to repress such symptoms of consciousness—surely it ought to have been visible on this clear moonlight night.

At length we had to make for the shore. It seemed as though we were leaving out there on the water all the white wonder of the moon; but when we had run the boat into the boat-house and got up among the trees, there too was the strong white light, gleaming on black branches, and throwing bars of shadow across the pale, brown road. We started on our way back to the village, by the margin of the mere. The mists seemed colder here than out on the water; and now we could see the moonlight struggling with a faint white haze that lay all over the surface of the lake. My Lady and Bell walked on in front; the Lieutenant was apparently desirous to linger a little behind.

"You know," he said, in a low voice, and with a little embarrassment, "why I have resolved to live in England."

"I can guess."

"I mean to ask Mademoiselle to-morrow—if I have the chance—if she will become my wife."

"You will be a fool for your pains."

"What is that phrase? I do not comprehend it," he said.

"You will make a mistake, if you do. She will refuse you."

"And well?" he said. "Does not every man run the chance of that? I will not blame her—no; but it is better I should ask her, and be assured of this one way or the other."

"You do not understand. Apart from all other considerations, Bell would almost certainly object to entertaining such a proposal after a few days' acquaintanceship—"

"A few days!" he exclaimed. "*Der Himmel!* I have known her years and years ago—very well we were acquainted—"

"But the acquaintanceship of a boy is nothing. You are almost a stranger to her now—"

"See here," he urged. "We do know more of each other in this week or two than if I had seen her for many seasons of your London society. We have seen each other at all times—under all ways—not mere talking in a dance, or so forth."

"But you know she has not definitely broken off with Arthur yet."

"Then the sooner the better," said the Lieutenant, bluntly. "How is it you do all fear him, and the annoyance of his coming? Is a young lady likely to have much sympathy for him, when he is very disagreeable, and rude, and angry? Now, this is what I think about him. I am afraid Mademoiselle is very sorry to tell him to go away. They are old friends. But she would like him to go away, for he is very jealous, and angry, and rude; and so I go to her, and say—no, I will not tell you what my argument is, but I hope I will show Mademoiselle it will be better if she will promise to be my wife, and then this pitiful fellow he will be told not to distress her any more. If she says no—it is a misfortune for me, but none to her. If she says yes, then I will look out that she is not any more annoyed—that is quite certain."

"I hope you don't wish to marry merely to rescue a distressed damsel."

"Bah," he said, "you know it is not that. But you English people, you always make your jokes about these things—not very good jokes either—and do not talk frankly about it. When Madame comes to hear of this—and if Mademoiselle is good enough not to cast me away—it will be a hard time for us, I know, from morning until night. But have I not told you what I have considered this young lady—so very generous in her nature, and not thinking of herself—so very frank and good-natured to all people around her—and of a good, light heart, that shows she can enjoy the world, and is of a happy disposition, and will be a very noble companion for the man who marries her. I would tell you much more, but I cannot in your language."

At all events, he had picked up a good many flattering adjectives. Mademoiselle's dowry in that respect was likely to be considerable.

He we got back to the inn. Glasses were brought in, and we had a final game *bézique* before retiring for the night; but the Lieutenant's manner towards Bell was singularly constrained and almost distant and he regarded her occasionally in a somewhat timid and anxious way.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—"It is perhaps unnecessary for me to explain that I am not responsible for the strange notions that may enter the heads of two light-hearted young people when they are away for a holiday. But I must protest against the insinuation—conveyed in a

manner which I will not describe—that I was throughout scheming against Arthur's suit with our Bell. That poor boy is the son of two of my oldest friends; and for himself we have always had the greatest esteem and liking. If he caused us a little annoyance at this time, he had perhaps a sort of excuse for it—which is more than some people can say, when they have long ago got over the jealousies of courtship, and yet do not cease to persecute their wives with *far from good-natured* jests—and it is, I think, a little unfair to represent me as being blind to his peculiar situation, or unmerciful towards himself. On the contrary, I am sure I did everything I could to smooth over the unpleasant incidents of his visit; but I did not find it incumbent on me to become a *partisan*, and spend hours in getting up philosophical—*philosophical!*—excuses for a rudeness which was really unpardonable. What I chiefly wish for, I know, is to see all those young folks happy and enjoying themselves; but it would puzzle *wisser heads* than mine to find a means of reconciling them. As for Count von Rosen, if he made up his mind to ask Bell to be his wife, because Ellesmere looked pretty when the moon came out, I cannot help it. It is some years since I gave up the idea of attempting to account for the odd freaks and impulses that get into the heads of what I suppose we must call the *superior sex*."]

From The Month.

A RUSSIAN OF THE LAST GENERATION.

"SIXTY years since," the name of Rostopchine was very familiar in many circles, as that of the Governor of Moscow who had the patriotic and desperate courage to plan and prepare the great conflagration of the ancient Muscovite capital, which had so fatal an influence on the fortunes of Napoleon. Count Rostopchine, at a later period, thought it well to disclaim the deed, but his disclaimer has not gone for much in the opinion of historians, or of the public. What is important at present is, that whether he burnt Moscow or not, he was just the man to do it. What he is said to have done as Governor of the "holy city" is exactly in keeping with the character evinced by the rest of his career, and it is in this sense that we shall proceed to study his life.

Theodore Rostopchine belonged to that race in Russia who kept up the characteristics of their Tartar origin, and who only accepted from necessity, and against the grain the shallow attempts at civilization forced upon them by Peter the Great. His father, Count Rostopchine, was a man of little civilization but considerable talent, and possessing great strength of char-

acter. His mother died in giving birth to her second son. Thus Theodore was deprived almost in infancy of the softening influence of a mother's care, and we shall not be surprised to find in him all the roughness of his native race; that unbending determination which he inherited was, however, allied to many noble qualities. Indeed, his biography is chiefly interesting from the fact that he is so complete a specimen of the national character. Theodore was probably born during a brief sojourn of his parents at Moscow, in 1765, but he passed his childhood in their own territory of Livna. He began his military career very early, and was appointed successively ensign in 1782, "sublieutenant" in 1785, lieutenant in 1787, and captain in 1789. At about twenty years of age he obtained permission from his father to travel for the completion of his education, and he spent a year in Prussia, partly at Berlin and partly at Gottingen. From the notes that he made at this period it is evident that he led a studious life, giving up only his evenings to the pleasures of society.

Upon his return to St. Petersburg, Rostopchine took up his military life with fresh ardour, and was burning with a desire for active service, which was soon granted. He acted as a volunteer at the siege of Oczakow, and for one year he served immediately under Souvarow, whose favour he gained by his readiness of speech. Upon his first introduction, after a few sentences, the General gravely asked him how many fish were contained in the Neva, and the young officer answered by the first number that came into his head, without a moment's hesitation. This presence of mind won for him the affection and protection of Souvarow, which he was able to repay fully in later years, when he used his influence with the Emperor Paul in his favour. After this campaign Theodore Rostopchine returned to St. Petersburg, where, besides his military duties and the serious study with which he occupied his time, he also entered into the pleasures of society, in which he was well fitted to shine by his brilliancy and originality. But he could not disguise his contempt for the corruption which reigned in the higher classes, and by the severity of his strictures he gained for himself more enemies than afterwards by the glory which he won, or even by the burning of Moscow.

In 1792 Rostopchine left the army, and was placed at the Court of the Empress Catharine. Here he began his connection

with the Emperor Paul, then hereditary Grand Duke, and we see proofs of the manliness and justice of his character in his conduct towards Paul. Paul was kept in the background and harshly treated by the Empress. He lived a very retired life at Gatselima, and the twelve courtiers appointed to attend him by turns were ready enough to imitate their betters by treating him with neglect and insult. Rostopchine was willing to supply those attentions which were omitted by the rest, but when two weeks elapsed and no one came to relieve him from his post, his indignation burst forth at such negligence towards the Prince. This resulted in quarrels and recriminations which reached the ear of Catharine, and Rostopchine was banished for a year from the Court. But he had gained the affection of the Grand Duke, and the affection then formed lasted during life, and did honour to them both, for the favourite was unsparing in his candour, while the master generally accepted it in good part.

During the year of exile which now followed, Rostopchine visited Prussia a second time. He evidently did not increase his affection for that country, and the notes that he has kept of his sojourn there are not wanting in force and satire; a few extracts will serve to illustrate the character of the man, as well as that of the people he was depicting—

The frontier. The town of Tsillintsig is small, ugly, and contains nothing remarkable; its most beautiful buildings are, as in all the small towns of Germany, the town hall, the cathedral, and post house. Here begin the Prussian States, the German language, and the reign of enforced patience. Ah, unhappy Russian traveller, weep and forget the Russian coachmen. Forget that horse: can trot or gallop. You know the sufferings that barbarians inflict upon Christians, but the latter can be ransomed from their slavery, while as for yourself, alas! nothing can save you.

The *poste*. It is managed by post masters who, for the most part, are retired officers, boasters, and chatterboxes. They have in their stables about sixteen large, heavy looking horses, with thick legs. First the post master inspects the traveller's carriage with the view of attaching an additional horse, which he always manages to do when he has supporters at hand, or when he happens to be a little more tipsy than usual. This rests with him, for the traveller is completely in his power. Then the horses are fed, while the postillions also refresh themselves. The post master smokes his pipe, shakes out the ashes, refills it, and smokes it again, relating his own history, his heroic deeds, his number of wounds, the esteem in which the King holds

him, and so on; and all this lasts till the time for starting. . . . At first I was indignant, but now my feelings are quite touched by the consideration that this immovable post is called the *extra post*—that is, the express! It is not wonderful that it should be so in Prussia when we remember the phlegmatic temperament of the people. In the schools of philosophy in ancient Greece, it required years to inculcate patience, but in these modern times the Prussian *poste* can form philosophers in a few miles. This *poste* is an unbearable torture, and the post masters are pitiless tyrants. Neither prayers, nor persuasion, nor tears, can move them; they will, through a cloud of smoke, emit the one word *gleich* (directly), and this *gleich*, which is their reply to everything, lasts an hour and a half. Some people have been goaded to fury, and struck them, but then, and still more slowly, they were conveyed by this *poste* to courts of justice, and condemned to heavy penalties. Others have given vent to abuse, but then the post master will fetch a rusty sword, and threaten to seek reparation for his wounded honour. I generally cast my malediction upon them, and went for a walk, or I would sit in the carriage and read, which was the only means by which I could stifle my anger and my regrets at having started for a foreign country.

Gleich is the word with which both post master and postillion endeavour to soothe the traveller's impatience. This *gleich* of the Prussian *poste* is, in comparison with the Russian *sey-tchass*, the French *à l'instant*, the Italian *subito*, and the English *directly*, like unto eternity in comparison with a moment.

After this journey in Prussia, Rostopchine returned to the Court of Russia, and about 1795 he married Catherine Protasow, daughter of Count Protasow, Civil Governor of Kalouga. She, with her four sisters, had been brought up by her aunt, the Countess Anna Stephanowna Protasow, maid of honour and favourite of the Empress Catherine. The young Countess Rostopchine was pretty, lively, and very well informed. She had acquired from her aunt the distinguished manners of the Court, but she was preserved from its corrupt influence by her taste for serious study, and by the high tone of her mind. She was eighteen, and Rostopchine thirty years of age, at the time of their marriage. Their first child, Sergius, was born a year later, and he was followed by seven others, three of whom died early in life. Soon after the marriage of Rostopchine, his position was quite changed by the death of the Empress Catherine in 1796. Paul became Emperor under the title of Paul the First and Rostopchine was at once one of the principal persons in the Empire. As is usual in such cases, he found the whole Court ready to bow down before him. Ros-

topchine has left to posterity an account of the Empress Catherine's death full of detail and good feeling. It is too long for insertion here, but some extracts we may give. We take up the account where the Empress is dying from an attack of apoplexy, and the Grand Duke Paul is hurrying to her side.

Having passed the palace of Tchesma, the Grand Duke got out of his carriage for a moment, and I called his attention to the beauty of the night. It was clear and tranquil, and it was only three degrees below the freezing point. The moon was now and then concealed by clouds, and sometimes afforded us her full light; it seemed as though all the elements were hushed into a solemn calm in presence of the great event which was about to take place. I glanced at the Grand Duke at the moment when his eyes were turned towards the unclouded moon, and I perceived that his face was bathed in tears. Strongly impressed by the emotions to which this day had given rise, and devoted heart and soul to him who was about to take possession of the Russian throne, as well as to my native country, I realized fully the grave consequences of these influences which might first obtain power over a despotic sovereign who was full of vigour, health, and impetuosity, and who had lost the power of self-control; forgetting, therefore, the distance of our position, I seized his hand, and said "Sire, what a moment is this for you," to which, pressing mine in return, he replied, "Patience, my friend, I have lived forty-two years, and God has sustained me, doubtless He will also give me the strength and wisdom necessary for the position of life to which He has called me. I hope all things from His goodness." He re-entered his carriage, and at half-past eight o'clock reached St. Petersburg, where few people knew the events that were occurring. The palace was filled with persons of various conditions assembled either by duty, fear, or curiosity, and who watched with disgust the close of a long reign and the commencement of another. . . . The Grand Duke, after entering his own apartments, went to those where his mother was lying, and in passing through those chambers, thronged with people who were watching for his access to the throne, he was affable and courteous to them all, while they received him, not as the heir, but rather as their sovereign. Having conversed with the doctors, and received from them particulars of the case, he retired with the Grand Duchess into a side chamber, and sent for those with whom he desired to speak or to whom he wished to give orders.

Among the different scenes sketched by Rostopchine in his account of Catharine's last hours, is an incident eminently characteristic of a Court, and it was not likely to pass unnoticed by one of his sardonic temperament. Zoubow had been in fa-

your with the Empress, and it was probably not known that Paul had promised him his protection. Rostopchine writes—

Having entered one of the public rooms, I saw Prince Zoubow seated in a corner. The crowd of courtiers held aloof from him as though he had the plague, and though he was dying with thirst he could get no one to fetch him even a glass of water. I sent a lackey for one and presented it to him myself, but those around, who refused him this attention would, the previous night, have built a splendid castle in the air upon the smallest notice received from him, jostling one another to get near that favourite, in this very room which was now converted into a crowded desert, so far as he was concerned.

In spite of the friendship which bound Rostopchine to the new Emperor, and the tokens of affection which Paul the First showered upon him, his position was not an easy one, and afforded him ample opportunity for showing the straightforward honesty of his nature. He did not scruple to risk the favour of his sovereign when the interest of that sovereign or of his country required it. Paul began his reign by acts of very wise legislation, but this was soon marred by outrageous follies and caprices. At one time out of hatred for France, he would proscribe all French fashions, giving orders himself as to what should be worn. At another time he would decree that all men and women should alight from their carriages and bow down before him, and such like absurdities. On one occasion, showing some logic in his folly, he took it into his head to say mass, in his capacity as supreme Head of the orthodox Church. "Since I am their Head," he said, "I have a right to do as they do." In spite of all that could be said he gave orders for magnificent vestments, had a chapel fitted up suitable to what he considered his pontifical rank, and would have accomplished this ridiculous sacrilege, only a Russian bishop bethought him of the objection that, according to St. Paul, a widower who had married again could not be received into Holy Orders. This argument disarmed him, and so changeable was his nature that the project once put off, he thought no more about it. The Emperor was violent and yet weak, proud, habitually mistrustful, anxious to do well and yet often doing much evil, of great intelligence and yet acting like a fool, as incapable alike of controlling his subjects as he was his passions, and often causing all those who surrounded him to tremble. Thus he unconsciously hastened towards

the catastrophe which was to terminate abruptly his life as well as his reign. Rostopchine seemed the only man who could guide him and who ventured to speak the truth. He had to use much discretion and tact, now managing him in one way, now in another, and Paul often got furious and ordered him into exile, recalling him however, very shortly, for he seemed unable to live without him.

Though generally using much address and even flattery in his management of the Emperor, Rostopchine spoke boldly enough when his master's or his country's interest required it. The following anecdote will prove this. Paul returned from parade one day greatly irritated, because he considered the cloth used for the soldier's uniform to be of very bad quality, and he ordered Rostopchine to write at once and desire that the cloth should be procured every year from England. Rostopchine replied that such a command would be tantamount to closing the national manufacture and ruining the Russian merchants, but, as Paul insisted, he wrote the letter and gave it to the Emperor to sign, but after his signature he added—"Do nothing of the kind; he is crazy." When Paul observed that he was adding something on his own account, he quietly handed him the epistle. Paul was walking up and down the room; he turned pale, strided up and down a few more seconds, then threw the letter into the fire and embraced Rostopchine, saying, "You are right, and I thank you. Would to heaven that all my servants were like you." On another occasion the Emperor was irritated for some reason against his wife, the Empress Mary, and ordered Rostopchine to prepare an edict consigning her to the Convent of Solovetsk, and declaring her two younger sons to be illegitimate. At first Rostopchine tried to bring him to reason, but finding he was too angry to listen to his persuasions, he allowed a few hours to pass, and then addressed to him the following letter—

Sire, — Your orders are being put into execution, and I am now busy preparing the fatal document. To-morrow morning I shall have the misfortune of presenting it to you. May God grant that you may not have the misfortune to sign it, and thus to write in history a page which will cover with shame the whole of your reign. Heaven has granted you all that was necessary for your own happiness and for the good of others, but you create a hell for yourself and condemn yourself to dwell therein. I am too bold, and expose myself to ruin, but in my disgrace I shall console myself by the

thought that I am worthy of your favours and of my own honour.

A few minutes afterwards he received a despatch from the Emperor containing his own letter and these words, written by Paul with his own hand —

You are a terrible man, but you are right, let nothing more be said on the subject. Let us sing, and forget all trace of it.
Adieu, Signor Rostopchine.

Except for a few brief estrangements caused by the candour of Rostopchine, he always retained the confidence of Paul, and the letters patent conferring on him the title of Count, give a surprising enumeration of the honours and public appointments which were showered upon him. He rendered many great services to his country, and among other instances of his policy may be named his influence in frustrating the schemes of Dumouriez, who visited St. Petersburg with the hope of drawing Paul the First into a fresh alliance against France. Rostopchine, though hating the atrocities of the French Revolution, retained a regard for France as a nation, and became dazzled by the success of Napoleon. He led Paul to look upon him as the restorer of peace and order, and passed rapidly from suspicion and hatred to hopefulness and admiration; but though it was easy to influence the mind of the Emperor, it was impossible to restrain his impetuosity. Paul took up violently the cause of Napoleon, and turned ruthlessly upon his former allies. He had afforded generous hospitality to Louis the Eighteenth at Mitau, but now he ordered him and his suite to quit Russian soil within forty-eight hours. His conduct with regard to England was equally rash, so that he plunged into hostilities very injurious to the welfare of Russia, for the cessation of intercourse with England seriously affected the commercial interests of the country. The dissatisfaction this caused probably hastened the tragic termination of his life. All around him were already groaning under his violence and caprice, and even his own family were not safe from the suspicious temper which darkened his life, and led him to commit insane acts of tyranny.

The plot which was destined to end his wild career was inaugurated by Count Fahlen, who was high in office, and enjoyed the confidence of his sovereign, but was ambitious and patriotic, and became alarmed at a policy which threatened ruin both to his country and himself. He concerted with Count Panine, who also had a

responsible post in the Ministry, and they decided on putting an end to the power of Paul, though it is not certain that Panine knew of the plot for assassination. As far as the Grand Duke Alexander was concerned, it is clear that he believed the scheme consisted only in an enforced abdication, and thus his passive consent was obtained. One step more had to be taken, namely, to banish from the Court the only two men whose attachment to the Emperor might act as a safeguard to him. This was only too easy with a man of his stormy nature. General Aratchchéief was removed from St. Petersburg, and Paul was by some means irritated against Rostopchine, who had to depart upon one of those periods of exile, which, though frequent, were generally so short in their duration.

There is no occasion here to enter into the painful details of the assassination of Paul, which are a matter of history. The Grand Duke Alexander learnt too late that he had unconsciously been a party to the murder of his father, but he could not openly resent a crime to the planning of which he had in a measure been privy. Although it was given out that Paul the First had died from a sudden attack of apoplexy, there was no doubt in the public mind as to the true nature of the event, and the horror which it excited proves that civilization had made some progress during the previous half century. Rostopchine mourned sincerely the death of his benefactor, and declared openly that except for his absence it could not have occurred. This was evidently the opinion also of his master, for when his suspicions, which were ever on the alert, took definite form, his confidence in his old friend and favourite returned. There is a certain pathos in the few words which Paul sent to Rostopchine only a few days before his assassination —

I want you, return quickly. — PAUL.

The missive reached him too late, for when Rostopchine arrived at St. Petersburg, it was to hear of his master's sudden death, and to return home in sorrow — this time a voluntary exile.

The Emperor Alexander offered Rostopchine a post of honour, but he declined it, and retired to his estate at Voronovo. He had high ideas of the duties incumbent on a Russian noble on his own estates, for his opinions were autocratic, and perhaps the care which he bestowed upon the administration of justice prevented his realizing the abuses which too often accrue from the

unlimited power. The horrors of the French Revolution had made a deep impression upon him, and he confounded the false cry of liberty with the claims of constitutional government.

During his retirement, Rostopchine's letters give continual proof of his kindly nature. One which he wrote upon the death of Kraft, his family physician, is full of gratitude for the professional care received during his residence at the *château*, and expressive also of grief, as at the loss of a valued friend. Many specimens are left to us of his intercourse with Prince Tsitsianow, one of his dearest friends, and a few extracts will convince us that, spite of the roughness of his nature, and the barbarous character often attributed to him, he possessed a warm and tender heart and much nobility of character.

Prince Tsitsianow had been appointed General of the Caucasian Army and Governor of Georgia: he took Ganja, and filled his position with considerable honour, but he perished in 1809, the victim of a treacherous plot; on one occasion Rostopchine writes —

I would that my hand were withered for having signed the union between Georgia and Russia when I was Minister of Foreign Affairs, for that union now makes me tremble for your life.

When, at the beginning of 1804, Rostopchine heard that his friend had taken the important town of Ganja, he congratulated him thus —

Glory to God, and glory also to you! Not because you have, without artillery, taken the Asiatic Gibraltar; neither because you have added the laurels of Ganja to those of Ostchakow and Ismaël; but because your entreaties, and that voice which is the echo of a great soul and noble heart, have penetrated the minds of your soldiers, and you have turned ferocious tigers into human beings! I am convinced, that upon the battle field you looked forward with joy to giving up the service, and that in your heart you exclaimed, like Frederick the Great, "My God, when will You put an end to my torment?" Now we may consider how your application will be received; whether you will be granted an honourable dismissal, or whether, by compensation, they will induce you to remain at your post. Your letter is like yourself, and I see by the date that it was written before the attack. So much the better for you, to give up your appointments after so grand an exploit, that you leave to your successor not the anxiety of taking a fortress, but only the trouble of guarding it. I admire your way of relating events; one recognizes in it the pen which gave an account of the taking of Grodno, which was so much talked about, and described

as exemplary and unexampled. I think, too, it is a happy expression that "the mercy of the sovereign penetrated the hearts of the soldiers, in spite of irritation." If you had been present when I read your letter and your account of events, you would have been convinced how thoroughly I know and understand you. My tears would have flowed upon you; but I trust that life will still grant us many opportunities for mutual sympathy, and of shedding such tears together.

Later on he writes —

It is a great sorrow to me, dear friend, that you should be too much engaged to write to me oftener. I am constantly tormenting myself about you, and when I have no immediate reason for anxiety I ask myself when I shall see you, and whether it will be a long time hence. However, it is the will of God, to which all thoughtful beings must submit. May God watch over you; having blessed your soul, He will save your body, and restore you to your friends who are longing impatiently for you.

The glance afforded us by these quotations into the tenderness of Rostopchine's heart will lead us to imagine what such a man must have been with a beloved wife and children, in whom, to use his own words, he found all the elements of happiness. His pen gives us many traits of paternal fondness. Here is an account of his children. Sergius, his firstborn, comes first in his notice —

Sergius makes wonderful progress in geography and history, particularly with regard to Russia, which, thanks to his mother, he knows as a Russian should do. He has a taste for drawing, is clever in arithmetic, and speaks French, English, and German as fluently as he does Russian. He is passionately fond of reading, but is not allowed to indulge it too much, because of his delicate health, which also renders him a little timid. In face he is the portrait of his mother, except for the colour of his eyes. He is obstinate, like myself, when force is used with him, but he is amenable to reason and has an excellent heart. Natascha has a very pretty face, sparkling with wit, and she often gives proof of intelligence beyond her age. She is very attractive, and, like her mother, fond of constant occupation. Sophalette, having rude health, plays the part of buffoon; she is most intelligent, and delights in inventing little histories beyond the comprehension of the listeners. On one occasion, having made a mistake in copying from a book, she thought she would correct the book itself, but the ink made a blot and her guilt was discovered. When her mother once told her she could not read her writing she replied — "But why should you wish to read what I write, when you possess so many books?" Natascha touched our hearts deeply. Every time we gave her medicine or

arranged her pillows she would kiss our hands, saying — "I am better, go and take some rest." One more incident regarding Sophie. She heard little Alovville praising my wife's writing, and saying — "When I am grown up I shall write as well as that." Sophie became red with anger, and exclaimed — "That is good! You, a little girl, to talk of writing like mama, who is a clever lady!" I must tell you that my daughters resemble me in being passionate. Natascha knows how to control herself, but the youngest gives way to fits of anger, notwithstanding the sermons she gets. One day she dropped some stitches in a stocking she was knitting, which made her go into a fit of despair and cry out — "Now I cannot live any longer; I must and will die." Her sister having told her it was very wicked to talk like that, she replied, through her tears — "God will forgive me, I am so miserable."

One more expression from the pen of Rostopchine may complete the picture of domestic affection which we would draw of him in his six years of retirement from public business —

I have grown so into the habit of being surrounded by my wife and children, that when business obliges me to be absent for a few days I cannot take leave without a feeling of despair.

Further on, alluding to such a parting, he writes —

My departure was sorrowful. Those who know my wife will understand this; but I was free from anxiety about my children. They were with their mother, who is their mentor, their guardian, their example, and their protector in God's sight.

Although in his tranquil home life Rostopchine felt no regrets, and had no ambitious longings for public honours, his ardent love for his country kept alive his interest in the politics of the day, and allowing his judgment to be influenced by the result of false liberty in France, he felt a profound mistrust for the liberal tendencies shown by the Emperor Alexander, and was anxious that Russia should retain her autocratic form of government without being imbued with the political bias either of France or England. He indulged in a dream of wise and Christian government without any change in the existing system, not perceiving that in a country where the laws depended upon the personal will of the sovereign there could be no guarantee for such just legislation as he would have desired. The establishment of the French Empire does not seem to have startled him, and he writes upon the subject —

I have just heard that a messenger has ar-

rived at St. Petersburg with the intelligence that Bonaparte has accepted the title of Emperor of the French and King of Italy. . . . Thus he has brought France back to her original form of government, after first accustoming her to his despotic power. It amuses me to observe that men will never own they have been fools, and that it was hardly worth while to put to death two millions of people, to behead all the authorities, to upset everything, and to commit a thousand horrible sacrileges in order to convert a simple captain into an Emperor and a King.

The murder of the Duc d'Enghien shocked him, and he soon perceived the encroaching policy of Napoleon, but he was anxious to avoid a war which he considered would be disastrous to Russia. At this time his correspondence is expressive of most melancholy prognostications, but a nature like his could not remain long inactive. He had purchased a *château* at Moscow, where he spent some portion of every year, and the high position which he had held during the reign of Paul the First had naturally led to his being drawn into public affairs. His writings first led to this result, for he had many gifts that qualified him for authorship, though only two specimens are preserved to us; one brochure, entitled the *Soliloquy of Sila Andreivitch Bagatzen*, made a great sensation, and probably led to the appointment of Rostopchine to be Governor of Moscow. Many blamed it for its caustic severity, but it seems to have produced its intended effect in rousing national ardour. In this brochure a wounded officer, just returned from war, is supposed to be reflecting upon the past greatness of his country, and lamenting that it had now become the rendezvous of French-men, while Russians were proud to pay court to, and imitate them. He continues —

What are our children now taught? To pronounce French well, to turn out their toes, and to curl their hair. He only is thought witty and agreeable whom a Frenchman can claim as his countryman. How can our people love their country when they do not even know their own language! How can they defend their faith, their sovereign, or their native land, if they are not taught God's law, and are allowed to treat Russians like bears! . . . What need we desire better than to be Russians? We need feel no shame in coming forward; let us raise our heads, we have plenty to say for ourselves. Who are these people who have come amongst us, and to whom we confide our children? So long as they pronounce French well, nothing else seems to affect us; we allow them to cast insult upon our nation without dismay. Is not this a disgrace? In other countries, French is taught to children, but only that they may know it, not that it may

replace their mother tongue. . . . Two maxims suffice for a law to the French — all that succeeds is right; all that one can take, one may keep. Slaken their reins, and a revolution follows. What have they done during the last twenty years? They have destroyed, ruined, and burnt everything.

The article goes on in this way for some time, and then, as it were by comparison, appeals to the patriotism of the Russians, reminding them that they, who had such reason to be proud of their ancestors, need not cringe to foreigners.

The peace of Tilsit gave brief hopes of tranquillity, which, however, Rostopchine never shared; he restrained all incitements to war, but still looked forward to it calmly as inevitable. About this time his domestic life received rather a severe shock, and though the event was a happy one, Rostopchine commands our sympathy by the forbearance he evinced in what to him must have been a great trial. The Countess Rostopchine, in spite of the many amiable qualities which endeared her to her husband, had been brought up without any serious religious belief, and although she appreciated the beauties of the Christian faith, it was only to exclaim, with a sigh, "What a pity that so beautiful a belief should not be true!" Many circumstances, however, conduced to draw her nearer to the truth — the experience of earthly vanity, intercourse with eminent Christians, and an intimacy with Count Joseph de Maistre, all had a share in rousing her to inquiry, and she was much edified by the zeal and charity of the Jesuits, who had been hospitably received in Russia when banished from other parts of Europe. Serious study and meditation had ripened these good influences, and a small book of controversy lent to her by the Catholic curé at Moscow completed the good work. The Countess at once abjured the Greek schism, and made her confession of faith under this same priest, but, by his earnest advice, she unwillingly consented to keep her conversion secret for a time. The details of her religious life at this time are most interesting, and take us back in thought to the early ages of Christianity. Every week the priest dined with Count Rostopchine, who kept almost open house when residing in Moscow. After dinner the Countess would walk up and down with the priest as though in conversation, and so would make her confession. When they were beyond the reach of observation he would give her a small pyx, containing seven consecrated particles, and would receive from her in

return an empty pyx, to be refilled for her the following week. She would then retire into her chamber, which, according to the Russian custom, was adorned with icons of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, and where lamps were kept burning night and day. There she would place the Blessed Sacrament on her *priedieu* and adore her hidden God, then return to the company as though nothing unusual had happened. Every day she received a sacred particle, communicating herself like the Christians of the first centuries.

When the time came for her to tell the Count, it cost her a severe struggle, since she was well acquainted with his patriotic devotion to the national Church, and she had not only to encounter the violence of his temper, but to inflict a wound upon the heart she loved. However, she had already begun to reproach herself with cowardice for so long a concealment; one morning, therefore, after communion she went to her husband, and said with simplicity — "I have a secret to tell you, and I am going to cause you great sorrow, but I am not free to avoid it, for I have obeyed the will of God. I am a Catholic!" He stood silent and motionless as one paralyzed, and she left him without his speaking a word. For a week he never addressed a syllable to her, but his angry and melancholy countenance sufficiently expressed his displeasure. However, at the end of a week he approached her in his usual manner, took her hand, and embracing her, exclaimed — "You have indeed pierced my heart, but as your conscience commanded you to become a Catholic, you were right to obey it. It is the will of God, and we will speak of it no more." And indeed he never brought up the subject again. This was the only serious dissension they ever had, but at this very period, in one of his writings, he mentions her in a way that can hardly be surpassed for affection and respect.

Having thus disclosed her secret to her husband the Countess Rostopchine was eager to impart it to her sisters, one of whom the Countess Vassiltchikow, had recently died; the other three she met together at Moscow, the Princess Galitzine and the Countess Tolstoi, who were married, and the Countess Barbe Protassow, who had remained single. When in their presence she announced her change of faith, she looked for reproaches and regrets, but instead of this, the Princess threw herself into her arms, saying, "I also am a Catholic." "And so am I," exclaimed the Countess Barbe. After the first joy at

this discovery, the Countess Rostopchine began to lament that her dead sister had not had this grace. "Do not weep for her," said the Princess Galitzine, "she became a Catholic three months before her death." Thus, out of four sisters, three had been converted to the Catholic faith without any mutual interchange of their opinions, and if we may look upon them as conveying some idea of religious bias in Russia, it will afford great hopes for the gradual progress of Catholicity in that country.

To return to Count Rostopchine. He had not long been at the head of affairs at Moscow before the course of events proved that war with France was unavoidable, and upon the 24th of June, 1812, after repulsing all overtures for peace, Napoleon crossed the Niemen, and set foot on Russian territory. But he who had conquered till he scarcely thought defeat possible, was in his turn to be vanquished by enemies different from any he had yet encountered. He had never calculated on the severities of a Russian winter, nor the self-sacrificing hardihood of the Russian character. In its progress, the French army met with the passive resistance of conflagrations and deserted towns. Even after the hardfought victory at Smolensk, they gained possession at last, only to find it a heap of ruins. The most serious attempt at resistance was at the Moskowa, which was in itself so disastrous to the Russians. At every step that Napoleon advanced towards Moscow, the valour and patriotism of the Russians increased, but especially did Rostopchine, in his capacity as Governor, keep up the courageous determination of the people by his various proclamations and exhortations. Kovtsov had been appointed commander-in-chief of the army, and, confiding in his good faith, Rostopchine had believed the accounts of victory, until the intelligence reached him of the defeat and bloodshed of Borodino, near the Moskowa. He also believed in his assurances of another battle soon to follow. But time passed, while he awaited in vain the signal to arms. At last he visited the camp, and he has left among his memoirs a description full of wrathful contempt of his interview with Kovtsov, who he declares did nothing to merit the title of "saviour of Russia." The generals assembled in camp were of opinion that no engagement could take place with the army situated as it then was, and Rostopchine returned to the city in great anger, but undismayed, ready to play his part in the terrible drama. From

this moment, perhaps, may date his determination of burning Moscow, for a few words dropped by him to the Prince of Wurtemberg give a clue to his thoughts. During the same evening he received a formal intimation of the abandonment of Moscow, upon which he wrote the following furious but dignified note to the Emperor Alexander, who was as much startled as himself upon finding the true state of affairs —

An aide-de-camp of Prince Kovtsov has brought me a letter, in which he asks my police officers to guide the army in the direction of Riasan. Your Majesty! Kovtsov's conduct decides the fate of the capital, and of your whole empire. Russia will shudder when she hears of the evacuation of that city wherein is concentrated the greatness of the whole State, and wherein are resting the ashes of your Majesty's ancestors. I represent the army. I take all with me, and it only remains for me to weep over my country.

After this, Rostopchine rapidly completed his arrangements for the evacuation of Moscow. It was observed afterwards, as significant, that among other measures, he ordered the removal of all the fire engines; that when questioned he answered — "I have very good reason for it;" but immediately added, "Still, for my own use, I have only brought away the horse which I ride and the clothes which I wear." All the inhabitants hurried to depart, and when Rostopchine passed through the gates, three cannons were fired as a signal for the dispersion of the populace, which served also as a formal abandonment by Rostopchine of his post as Governor. To his son Sergius, then a youth of sixteen, who was riding by his side, he turned and said — "Salute Moscow for the last time, since in half an hour it will be in flames." This adieu to the city took place on the 14th September, 1812.

Napoleon, upon reaching the term of his hopes, expected to be met by offers of surrender, but not a soul appeared. Two hours passed; then the cry arose that Moscow was deserted. He concealed his chagrin, and ordered that the city should be preserved uninjured, strictly forbidding any pillage. After the first night, however, the truth began to dawn upon the invaders. One fire after another broke out. At first it was attributed to the recklessness of a victorious soldiery, but soon the conflagration was proved to be the result of an organized plan, the perpetrators having been left in Moscow for that purpose. At first Napoleon smiled incredulously at the report of the flames

which surrounded him, then he strode excitedly in the direction of the fire. Soon, however, he perceived that the destruction was universal, for, turn which way he would, the terrible element blocked up the path; so at last he was driven back to the Kremlin, as the only safe place. This, the palace of the Czars, he was determined he would not yield; yet, ere long, the cry of "Fire" once more arose. Twice the flames were extinguished, to burst forth again. But a Russian soldier succeeded in setting fire to the tower of the Arsenal. It could no longer be doubted that the edifice was doomed to destruction. This decided Napoleon, and on the 17th September he ordered a guide to conduct him from the city in the direction of St. Petersburg. It appeared, however, as though the walls were besieged by an ocean of fire, and their first attempts were useless. At last, they escaped through a gate leading towards the Moskowa; but even then they seemed for a time in still greater danger—fire and smoke hemmed them in. Napoleon jumped from his horse, and ran down one narrow passage which alone was open. Those who followed him had to cover their faces to protect them from scorching, while they seemed to be walking on red-hot coals. Fortunately for them, a detachment of soldiers met and guided them in safety, though even in their flight they encountered fresh danger, for they were compelled to pass a large supply of gunpowder. But we need not follow their fortunes, since our interest at present is with Rostopchine, who risked this appalling act and all its consequences rather than yield the pride of his country to the exultation of its foe. It is true that he has shrunk from the responsibility, or the glory, of acknowledging himself its author, but the weight of evidence would be difficult to disprove. Upon leaving Moscow, he joined the army of Kovtsov, which was marching towards the west, passing his splendid *château* at Voronovo. Rostopchine went towards it, and, in spite of the remonstrances of those Generals who accompanied him, he set fire to it. In the presence of the Generals, he said, "What I could not myself do at Moscow, I will accomplish here, in setting fire, with my own hand, to this dwelling, which I would desire to be twenty times as beautiful and costly." Sir Robert Wilson, who was then with the Russian army, has left us an account of this scene. When Rostopchine entered the *château* lighted torches were distributed to those who accompanied him, and who remained near the entrance,

while he passed to his own room. Here he paused a moment, and the memories of past happiness seemed to crowd upon him. He was profoundly moved, so that even his hand trembled in the act of destroying these mementos of his dearest affections. Suddenly turning to Sir Robert Wilson, he said, "This is my bridal bed; I have not the heart to set it on fire; spare me this grief!" The Englishman was greatly touched, and hesitated to render so painful a service, until he had seen Rostopchine set light to the rest of the apartment. He did not remain long with Kovtsov, of whom he wrote and spoke with the bitterest contempt. It was hardly likely that the comparatively passive policy of the one should satisfy the fiery energy of the other.

Rostopchine was still Governor of Moscow, where he received, on his return, the most enthusiastic applause; the whole population forgetting their ruined homes to greet him, who was here honoured as the saviour of Russia. This, however, was not to last. When excitement had cooled down, the merchants and nobles realized the extent of their disaster, so that he was treated at first with silence, then complaints were raised against his administration, until Alexander sent functionaries to inquire into the matter. No immediate result followed, but Rostopchine, who understood human nature well, prepared to resume his private life, though while continuing at his post he exerted himself energetically to restore public order. The last events of his governorship were the rejoicings at the conclusion of peace in 1814. When, a month afterwards, the Emperor entered Moscow, he treated Rostopchine with marked coldness. There is reason to suppose they never came to an open rupture, the Emperor conferring upon Rostopchine the dignity of Counsellor of the Empire, but it remained an honorary one, and he retired permanently from the honours and duties of public life at the age of forty-nine. After this he lived once more the routine of private virtue, for which we have already had to admire him, not, however, in the tranquillity of his country home, as his health rendered travelling desirable, and still more did the resentment and jealousy of the Russians compel him to seek repose on a foreign soil. His first journey was to Toplitz, his second to Carlsbad, during which we have many scraps of his penmanship, full as ever of tender affection, alternating with powerful hits of satire. For a time his health improved; but the

following year he had again to wander, on which occasion he visited France for the first time, passing by Stuttgart and Frankfort to Paris.

There could hardly have been a more unfavourable time to visit this capital, still the scene of contending parties, as well as suffering from the results of previous war and revolution. To a man of his iron temperament, the character of the French must have appeared to great disadvantage, ready as they seemed to turn from one form of government to another, forgetful alike of revolutionary horrors and the disasters of war. At any rate, in Rostopchine's notes at this period there are many sharp satires against the French; nor does a close acquaintance seem to have altered his views, for even at the close of his sojourn, his descriptions breathe the same tone of contempt, at the same time that he prognosticates those further changes which eventually occurred. His sarcastic criticisms, however, apply chiefly to the political character of the people, and he rendered ample justice to their courtesy and amiability in private life. In his earlier history we were amused by the almost pathetic description of German slowness and obstinacy, especially in the matter of post-horses, and we are thus prepared to sympathize in his delight at the promptitude with which these arrangements could be made in France. He writes to his wife —

The roads are splendid, . . . the management of the *poste* excellent; without the horses having been ordered beforehand, they were changed in ten minutes. But what may surprise you most is that they only employ three horses, while in Germany one had a fight to be let off with six. I have cordially made my peace with the French; in their own country they are so different from elsewhere. Their character is one of ready politeness, which is evidently instinctive, for even the peasants, beggars, and postillions make pretty speeches to you quite naturally.

Immediately upon his arrival at Paris, Rostopchine found himself sought after as a celebrity. But he was determined not to be made a lion of, contenting himself with introductions to those who, either from merit or rank, might lay special claim to his notice. Amongst others we distinguish the names of Louis the Eighteenth, the Duc d'Orleans, the Princes, Talleyrand, Madame Swetchine, and Madame de Staël, but the accounts that remain of his impressions are of a very passing nature. An amusing specimen is given us of his intimacy with the celebrated Dr. Gall. Rostopchine writes —

At our first interview he was much struck with the formation of my head, and exclaimed, "You have a wonderfully well shaped head; I never saw one equal to it, except a skull which I have in my collection." I trust, however, he will not deprive me of my head; but I fancy if I died, he would take possession, and use it for his observations.

The Count was not mistaken as to the sentiments of the great phrenologist, for when they parted after several years of friendship Dr. Gall embraced him cordially, and with a voice broken by grief, assured him that after his death he would at any cost procure his skull, in order to study its bumps and enrich his collection!

Rostopchine spent much of his time in visiting the principal objects of interest at Paris, paying special attention to those that were in any way connected with Marie Antoinette, for whose memory he felt great admiration and compassion. Among other eminent persons, he became acquainted with Madame de Staël, but they had no affection for one another, and he offended her by refusing an invitation to dinner, when she had hoped to add him to her circle of admirers. This so irritated her, that when they met in society some little passage of arms was sure to take place. Upon one occasion he writes thus of a skirmish of words which passed between them when they met at the Duc d'Escars —

She got into a passion, but I retained my self-possession. It was the subject of her famous Benjamin Constant, who had said that Russia was not even a country. Every one was on my side, for Madame de Staël is feared more than she is loved. She attempted to joke, telling me she had written that I was born before the age of civilization. I replied by informing her that I had called her a "pious conspirator," and therefore we were quits. This caused great laughter, so, according to the precepts of the country, after this hit I took my leave.

Of all the public institutions of Paris, the Hotel Dieu chiefly excited his sympathy. His was a very generous nature, and one that could well appreciate the devoted life led by Sisters of Charity; in fact, we gather from some of his letters to his wife, that his own time was much occupied in consoling and assisting the poor, the love of relieving distress being one of his most special characteristics.

At last, finding his health did not improve, and growing weary of separation from his family which he loved so dearly, he begged his wife to join him at Paris with all his family. This she readily consented to, and they spent five years there together, she occupying herself chiefly in

piety, good works, and literary labours, while he continued to enter into society occasionally, but with great moderation. During this time two of his daughters were married, one, who remained in the Greek Church, became the wife of Dmitri Narischkine, a young Russian officer, nephew to a very old friend of Rostopchine's. The other daughter, who became a Catholic, married Count Eugène de Ségur. Thus the tie was strengthened that bound Rostopchine to French soil; but the necessity of attending to his estates, as well as his strong love for his native country, led him to decide on a return thither, which he accomplished in the spring of 1823. The first few months that he again spent in Russia, he passed at his *château* of Voronovo, which had been in a great measure restored. Here he wrote those memoirs, part of which have furnished our narrative, but the great bulk of which are kept back from publicity by the Russian Government. From Voronovo he went to St. Petersburg, then settled for the winter in the only one of his residences at Moscow that had been spared by the conflagration. Immediately upon his arrival in Russia, Rostopchine sent in his resignation of all civil or military appointments, which the Emperor accepted, leaving him the purely honorary title of Grand Chamberlain. It was about this time that being asked to write his memoirs, he composed the sketch that gained such notoriety, entitled — *Simple Memoirs of Myself: written in Ten Minutes*. His special gifts of originality, wit, satire, candour, and powers of observation are combined and prominent in this brochure, which has been translated into almost every European language.

Amid all his disappointments and trials one sorrow had hitherto been spared to Rostopchine. He had never felt any severe domestic loss, but in the death of his unmarried daughter, Lisa, he was now to experience a grief which overcame him to an extent which no public calamity had done. She is described as young, beautiful, charming; and the parents were slow to realize that consumption had laid its fatal hand upon her. The father's letters written at this time are but another proof of his deeply tender nature, but the Countess had an object dearer to her heart than even the life of her child, the salvation of her soul. At first she contented herself with prayers, but when she perceived that Lisa was indeed hastening to the grave, she inquired whether she

would not embrace the Catholic faith. From the readiness of her acquiescence it was clear that the work of conversion had been going on perhaps unexpressed for fear of incurring her father's displeasure. Madame Rostopchine acquainted him with her daughter's wishes, to which he gave no consent, but as he made no objection the Curé of Moscow was sent for; he at once reconciled Lisa to the Catholic Church, then gave her the last sacraments whilst she was still fully conscious, and in a few hours she died peacefully.

Rostopchine seems never to have rallied thoroughly from this affliction. His own health grew more and more precarious, so that after the somewhat unexpected death of Alexander, he was unable to repair to the Cathedral to take his oath to the new Emperor, having to go through this formality in his own *salon*. Later, at the abdication of Constantine, the insurrection, and the taking possession of the throne by Nicholas, Rostopchine was already confined to his bed. He suffered greatly from his chest, growing daily worse until, in the month of January, 1826, those around him became convinced that his end was approaching. The faith in Christianity, which had accompanied him through life awoke in full vigour at the last hour, and he begged that a priest might render him the rites of his Church. His wife lost no time in fulfilling his wishes. It is true she would have given all things to see him a Catholic, but since it was impossible, there was much consolation for her in the good faith with which he received those sacraments which, although schismatical, were valid. After his interview with the priest, Rostopchine addressed to his wife words of calm resignation, while his features expressed a holy peace. He remained stretched upon his bed, his eyes closed, apparently asleep, when suddenly Madame Rostopchine, who was praying at his side, perceived that he raised himself, opened his eyes, and made distinctly the sign of the Cross; then he fell back upon his pillow — he had breathed his last sigh.

Thus died Count Rostopchine, on the 30th of January, 1826, aged sixty years and a few months. The Countess survived him many years, leading the life of a true Christian widow. She died at Moscow, the 28th September, 1859, at the age of eighty-three. Two of their children are still living; the youngest son, André, and the second daughter, who married the Count de Ségur.

F. G.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

LE MINISTRE MALGRE LUI:

A CONTEMPORARY STORY.

I.

WHEN young Telemachus was undergoing his competitive examination for the kingship of Crete, one of the questions set him was to define a happy man, and the wise Mentor who stood behind to prompt him, conformably to a practice since abolished in competitive examinations, bade him answer that the really happy man was he who considered himself so. Admitting this definition to be correct, then M. le Comte Fortuné de Ris, deputy of the National Assembly, who rented a first-floor flat in a house of the Boulevard Malesherbes, Paris, where no cats or parrots were kept, was the happiest man out. He had everything to make him happy, and sense enough to know it:—a handsome face, good figure, fine health, an income larger than people suspected,—though he passed for rich—and no profession, save that of enjoying himself, which is a pleasant profession when one succeeds in it. In age M. de Ris was two-and-forty, but looked younger; in complexion florid and jovial; in stature the same height as other Frenchmen. In a general way he was blithe-tempered, witty, and so thoroughly agreeable with women that he numbered more of them on the list of his intimate friends than would have sufficed for the vanity of ten less-favoured beings, even supposing these ten to have been covetous.

But M. de Ris was not happy because Nature had ordained it so beforehand, just as she settles for us whether we shall have brown hair or red. He was happy because for the conduct of his life he had laid down certain simple rules which experience had taught him gave happiness to others, and which he never transgressed. In the first place, he never spoke ill of people, but suffered them to think that he admired them sincerely all round: an illusion which did them no harm nor him either. In the next place, he always kept his word,—a surer recipe for contentment than many persons appear to imagine, though it must be stated that he avoided such rash promises as swearing to love one woman eternally, or vowing that he would never shake hands with such-and-such a friend again if he did this or that that was contrary to the public mood. M. de Ris's third rule was to render as many services as he could, and always to do so in such an enthusiastic way as to make the person obliged esteem that it was he,

the recipient, who conferred the favour by accepting it, and that the donor was touched to the heart, overjoyed and proud beyond measure at so much condescension. This, after mature reflection, was the only mode M. de Ris had been able to devise for preventing that each benefit conferred should become a cause of undying enmity. By leading persons to believe that in accepting his money and not returning it they were placing him under a lasting obligation, he had put matters upon a footing satisfactory and honourable to both parties. The Count's fourth and most important rule absolute, was to eschew politics.

Now this for a deputy of the Assembly was rather a knotty problem; but M. de Ris was not a deputy through any fault of his own. He had been returned in the winter of 1871, after the capitulation of Paris, when an assembly had been hastily convoked to meet at Bordeaux, and constituencies were selecting the most popular men they could find, without much reference to their tastes or their fitness. M. de Ris was nominated by the electoral committee of the department in which he owned a country seat, and had been returned out of hand. He was much chagrined by this result, which was communicated to him before he had yet left Paris, where, during the siege, he had fought with distinction as a commandant of Gardes Mobiles. His first impulse was to send in his resignation, and it is even said that his letter on this subject was ready signed and sealed; but somebody pointed out to him so eloquently that in times of trouble a man owes willing service to his country; and somebody else produced such telling arguments to show that a deputy need not know more about politics than any ordinary man, that M. de Ris gave in. He took his seat at Bordeaux in the very centre of the Assembly—so centrally, indeed, that if you had drawn a string from President Grévy's chair right across the Chamber, you would have found Count de Ris at the end of it. This meant that he was a "neutral;" that between Henry V., the Count of Paris, Napoleon III., and the Republic, he had no choice whatever; and that on every occasion where his vote was called for he intended recording it in such a way as not to compromise him. This was rather like tight-rope dancing, but M. de Ris's logic on the subject was unanswerable. "If I make a selection," said he, "before I know which of the four is going to win, I shall be obliged to adhere to it during the rest of

my life under pain of being thought a renegade, which is absurd. The Count of Chambord is a prince of great honour, whom I venerate; the Count of Paris could hold his own in point of intelligence with any sovereign or president in Christendom; Napoleon III. was always extremely gracious to me, and decorated me with his own hand without my having ever asked for such a favour; the Empress also is charming; as for the Republic, to declare myself an anti-republican is to say that I don't believe we French are capable of governing ourselves, which is an opinion only good for foreigners." The party-whips endeavoured to shake this neutralism by adroit flatteries, and the party-wits to undermine it by banter; but M. de Ris was impervious to flattery, and, when tackled by a wit, he put his case in a nutshell by saying: "I know four ladies of equal beauty: the Marquise de Rosecroix, who is a legitimist; the Countess de Potofen, who holds for Louis-Philippe II.; the Baroness de Diamantelle, who is enamoured of the Napoleons; and Mdme. Garulet, the deputy's wife, who is a Republican. If I were to enlist on the side of one of these ladies, the doors of the other three would be closed to me, and that I do not want." Whereat the wit would laugh, and let M. de Ris alone. In France they always let a man alone who knows how to defend himself.

It should be mentioned in passing, that M. de Ris's independence was not quite the effect of political poltroonery, though a foreigner might have opined that there was a strong spice of this foible flavouring it. His was rather the eclecticism and sceptic epicureanism of politics. He thought there was something good to be said for every party, and said it. He also thought that to pin one's faith to a set of doctrines which may be as unwearable in a year as last twelvemonth's fashions,—to cast in one's lot with a particular dynasty or system which may be less long of life than a deciduous leaf, is the act neither of a clever man nor of a wise one. There was a friend of his, who, towards the close of Louis Philippe's reign, had taken an undue interest in the Pritchard indemnity case. Every time the name of Pritchard was mentioned this hot-headed patriot foamed at the mouth, rolled flaming eyeballs, and launched such fulminating declamations against the policy of M. Guizot, that he ended by exasperating a supporter of that statesman, who called him out, and wounded him so badly that his right leg had to be amputated. Alas! who remem-

bers the Pritchard case now? The hot-headed and crippled patriot stumped through life bitterly anathematizing the day when he was induced to part with his leg for a cause about which nobody cared a pin six months after it had been settled; and which went clean out of the public mind long before the victim of it had learned to do without crutches. This example had always struck M. de Ris most powerfully. He often thought of what it would be if he himself were to lose his leg in over-zealous debate, and though he was not a fearer of duels, having fought several without much detriment to himself or his adversaries, he caused the name "Pritchard" to be neatly set in red enamel on a locket which he usually wore at his watch-chain; and every time he felt tempted to take an excited part in politics, he consulted this locket, learning thereby the great and prudent lesson that half the questions which set men by the ears are not worth the breath that is wasted on them. There was another excellent and cogent reason for M. de Ris's abstention, which was this;—Rich, young, and clever as he was (for he was clever, and had been told it so often that he really had some excuse for being modestly conscious of it), he could not, had he joined a political party, have remained one of the ruck. He must have come to the front, and, had his party triumphed, he must have risen to power, which of all things in the world was what he most dreaded. As a private nobleman he could pick his society as he pleased, flit about from palace to green-room; be on intimate terms with princes and artists, opera-singers or bishops; lift his hat on a race-course within the same five minutes to a duchess and a ballet-girl; and, in a word, wherever he went cotton with the pleasantest people, without feeling under any obligation to shake the hand of wheezy retired grocers because they were champions of the ministry, or listen to the emetic-like blandishments of semi-official journalists. Once a Minister or an ex-Minister, however, all this would be changed. Even if he had held office but a day he must go on stilts to the hour of his death, be on the alert about his dignity, and hold unimpeachably orthodox views as to the blending of liberty and order under a well established government. This was why he so sedulously held aloof from everything that resembled an opinion. This was why he always kept a quiverful of rapartees ready for those who sought to ensnare him; and this is why the head and front of his ambition amounted

only to this—to continue leading to his dying day the untroubled and amusing life he had lived ever since he was his own master.

However, it is not in the vastness of our wishes, but in the intensity of them, even when moderate, that lies the danger of disappointment: and we introduce M. de Ris on a morning of last autumn when there happened to him one of those grievous things which prove how utterly vain are all human calculations.

It was about nine o'clock. Wrapped in a velvet dressing-gown, the Count was seated in his toilet-room, opposite a bright fire of beech logs, and looking out of the window to watch cozily the rime of October frost being melted off the trees by the early sun. This was not in Paris, but at the Count's country seat, distant about two hours by rail from town,—an agreeable place, made up of mediæval picturesqueness and modern comfort, and situated in a district where revolutions and issues of tenpenny bank-notes had no effect upon the inhabitants. The Count was staying there for a couple of days' rest between two visits to the shooting-boxes of indefatigable Nimrod friends, and, having arrived late the evening before, he had luxuriated in bed this morning rather longer than was his wont when within gunshot of well-stocked coverts. M. Narcisse, his confidential valet, entered with a tray bearing his master's chocolate, newspapers, and letters, and laid these things on a hand-table near the arm-chair. Then, this done, he said with that lively and irrepressible tendency to converse which one had better not discourage in a French servant under pain of rendering him sulky:—"What a morning, M. le Comte! I suppose M. le Comte intends going over the estate?"

"I suppose I must, Narcisse," smiled his master, showing not much disposition to move, but rather drawing nearer to the fire; and he took another glance at the window. "These rounds of inspection to poultry-yards and pig-troughs are rounds of tribulation, Narcisse. You must lay me out my thickest boots, the yellow gaiters, and the velvet coat. I am not likely to meet anybody."

"Your neighbour M^{de} Claire arrived at the Château de Beaupré last night, M. le Comte," answered Narcisse, quite discreetly.

It was the forte of M. Narcisse, was discretion; for all which he was a brisk valet with eyebrows like two circumflex accents, which gave him a perpetual air of aston-

ishment, also a trick of doing everything in a headlong way, as if he were haunted by the constant vision of express trains about to start without him.

"Eh? M^{de} Claire is at the Castle?" ejaculated M. de Ris, rousing himself completely at the name which his servant had pronounced, and casting a third and much more wide-awake glance at the window. "Ah! I see the sun is shining, Narcisse, so, instead of the velvet, perhaps I may as well air that new shooting-suit I have not yet worn; and—stay—as to the boots, I won't have the thickest—not the thickest of all I mean—those with the nails—a medium pair will do."

M. Narcisse was just then bustling about the room at the rate of ten miles the hour, and setting out razors, strop and shaving-brush on the dressing-table, as if an imaginary guard had just rung the train-bell for an instantaneous departure. He finished his precipitate work to his satisfaction, and then vanished to fetch the suit that had never been worn and the boots that were not the thickest. M. de Ris, the while, left alone, and still thinking apparently of M^{de} Claire, gazed pensively for a short space into the fire. His reverie—which seemed to be a not unpleasant one—may have lasted a couple of minutes; then he turned to his chocolate and his letters, slowly stirring the one in its cup and examining the envelopes of the others before opening them.

The Count's gallant proclivities brought so many feminine missives into his hands that there was nothing novel in the fact that four out of the seven letters on his tray should be in ladies' writing. There were two mauve envelopes, a primrose, and a pale blue one, all addressed in that cramped and pointed calligraphy which speaks of the hard sharpness of French steel nibs, these instruments seeming indeed specially designed by Providence to check the torrents of correspondence which would flow from a Frenchwoman's mind if only the native pens would glide more smoothly over the paper. M. de Ris read his letters attentively, and it looked as if they entertained him, for he was nearly three quarters of an hour over them. At the conclusion he took out of a Dresden bowl, shaped like a dog's head, enough Turkish tobacco to roll himself a cigarette, and prepared for the other epistles, one of which he recognized as coming from a friend who wrote with energy about Croatian questions, another as a tradesman's circular, and the third, of which he now

observed for the first time that it was not stamped but franked.

There must have been something very foreboding about the look of this last envelope, for at sight of it the Count stopped half-way in his cigarette work and began with sudden but rapidly growing apprehension to turn the letter over between his fingers. How had he come not to notice before that the envelope was one of those whitey-brown ones in which Government correspondence is sent? that the postmark was "Versailles?" and that the seal bore the private crest of an extremely Great Personage under the Republic? He changed colour slightly. What could it be? The Assembly was not sitting then, so it could not enclose a letter of convocation. The extremely Great Personage was not likely to be issuing cards for a dinner-party at that time of the year, so it could not be that. He mused and mused; and the clouds gathered over his brow as over a sunny sky in April. Then he poured himself out a glass of water and drank it; and, as strong men in moments of emotion like to be standing, he stood up and leaned against the mantel-shelf whilst he broke the seal.

This is what the whitey-brown envelope contained:—

Versailles, October —, 1871.

MY DEAR COUNT DE RIS,—

As you have heard, the Ministership for the Cochin China colonies has just become vacant, and I write without delay to offer you the post. It has given me very great satisfaction to observe how, amid the interested strife of parties, you have acknowledged no flag but patriotism, and have constantly seconded the Government by your firm and enlightened votes; it has also been a no small source of pleasure to me to perceive that your excellent example has been followed by other members of the Assembly who have grouped themselves round you and now look up to you as their leader. In this time of national mourning, when the efforts of all good citizens should be directed towards the regeneration of their country, the qualities which recommend a Minister are essentially those which you possess: impartiality, amiability, and zeal for the public good—also antecedents free from ties to any political factions or individual. I am well aware that in asking you to undertake duties fraught with great responsibility and entailing a large sacrifice of daily time and anxiety I am making a heavy demand without having any adequate return to offer save the opportunity of widening your sphere of public usefulness. But I do not hesitate because the more arduous the labor and the less the reward so much the greater I know will be your tendency to accept. Trusting, therefore, that I may have the gratification of hearing an affirmative reply from your

own lips at Versailles, to-morrow, I beg you to believe, my dear Count de Ris, in the assurance of my high regard,

And here followed the signature.

Now this was pleasant. As crowning result of twenty years' careful strategy, it was worth commending to those who believe in the science of life. The Count stood for a moment like a man who has turned up the two of spades when he wanted the ace of diamonds, and the unlucky letter weighed down his hand to his side as if it had been written on sheet lead. He looked so stunned that on M. Narcisse reappearing with the suit that had never been worn and the medium boots, that domestic gave a start, and exclaimed: "Dear me! Is there anything the matter? Is M. le Comte ill?"

To which the Count, shaking off his torpor, replied with an abrupt vehemence which made M. Narcisse's eyebrows stand up more circumflexly than ever:—"Matter! Yes, everything is the matter. Do you know what a Minister is?"

M. Narcisse stood dangling the boots in his right hand and pressing the clothes to his heart with his left arm. He appeared to turn the matter over in his mind and then answered:—"A Minister, M. le Comte, lives in a mansion with sentries at the door; the newspapers cut jokes at him; he has a salary of a hundred thousand francs a year, and when a revolution comes he is obliged to escape in disguise."

"Yes, that's it, escape in disguise," answered the Count grimly, as this new feature in a Minister's privileges recurred to him. "Joked at by the papers and escape in disguise—there you have it in ten words. Well, Narcisse, they want to make a Minister of ME!"

M. Narcisse dropped both the boots, and in trying to recover them let go the clothes. When he had picked them up he looked very red, and with wonder-lit eyes said:—"They want to make a Minister of M. le Comte? Well—(here his voice broke into an excited gallop); well, I hope Monsieur will not neglect this opportunity of seeing that my brother Hyacinthe gets that post of Garde Champêtre which he has long been asking. Then there is my other brother Jasmin who was promised the military medal, and, as I often say, for a government to promise and not to keep is to make men revolutionary, though for the matter of that I have no sympathy with the Commune nor with M.

Gambetta, whom I think is just as bad, for as I often say, when a man stirs up the elements of popular discord, which ought never to be allowed under a strong government, and places himself at their head, he is responsible for all the breakages. And I don't think either that the wife of my cousin Jacques was well served by the Indemnity Commission, for it is certain that the largest of her two pigs, weighing a hundred and eighty-seven pounds, and a perfect picture, was eaten by the Prussians, who never paid, being thieves, and as I often say for a Government to stand such things . . ."

"Go to the devil," burst in Count de Ris. "At least go and order the phaeton round in half-an-hour, and fetch me some visiting clothes."

II.

Less than fifty minutes after the perusal of his letter, the Count was driving up the avenue that led to the Château de Beaupré, the residence of his neighbour M^{me}. de Claire. He had taken the most irrevocable resolution not to accept the post offered him, and during the ten minutes' ride between his own house and Beaupré Park he had pondered over a dozen different forms of declinatory replies to the Great Personage's dispatch. What did they mean by offering him a post for which he was unfitted by taste, nature, and social training? He whipped his horses with such vigour that John, his English groom, who sat behind him, and was unused to this way of dealing with high-mettled cattle, wondered what had come over the "guy'nor." Certainly there was no other answer possible to such a proposal but a courteous and decided — yes, that was it, courteous and decided — no. Nevertheless the Count wanted somebody to tell him he was quite right in his resolve, to pat him morally on the back as it were and assure him that nothing could be more reasonable and proper than his conduct; and this is why he called upon M^{me}. de Claire, of whose good sense he had the best opinion.

The Baroness de Claire was the widow of a nobleman considerably older than herself, who had died, leaving her a large fortune. She was twenty-eight, and a woman of great beauty and tact, who exercised a queen's sway over the whole department, and whom M. de Ris classed quite apart when dividing his feminine acquaintances into categories. If M^{me}. de Claire had been less graceful, less sweet-tempered, less eminently womanlike, she

might have passed for a strong-minded woman, for her thoughts were not cast in those common-place moulds which fabricate thoughts by the hundred thousand on a uniform pattern for common-place people. But as something of the notion of ill-cut gowns, and down on the upper lip attaches to the term "strong-minded" in reference to ladies, M^{me}. de Claire did not deserve the epithet. She was all that a woman should be; and if men could have coined a new word to express the blending of all that is amiable and good, with what is sensible and clever, they would have inaugurated it in her honour.

She was in a morning room when the Count was introduced, and exquisitely dressed in a *peignoir* of buff cashmere with wide trimming of white lace round the edges, and loose sleeves, and a lace scarf round the waist. In the rich clusters of her black hair she had set a scarlet-rose, and a small cross of black pearls that hung to a velvet ribbon served to show off the snowy outline of her throat. She was arranging flowers in a Japanese vase; and beside her, with her tiny dimpled chin resting on the table's edge stood M^{lle}. Lucie her daughter, a little mite of a thing four years old, who held her apron full of the dew-wet flowers, and handed them up one by one to her mother as they were wanted. There was an air of home and gaiety about the tastefully furnished room which offered many a pretty knicknack for the sun to try its golden arrows on; and through the muslin curtains which were closed to prevent the ingress of autumn wasps, who might have waged war on Miss Lucie, came a fresh healthy scent of morning, with twittering of blithesome sparrows.

The servant announced: "Monsieur le Comte de Ris," and M^{me}. de Claire held out her hand with one of her bright smiles.

"You are most welcome, my dear Count. I only returned yesterday, and Lucie and I were just wondering together whether our good fortune would send us any visitors."

"You see before you the most perplexed of men," answered the Count, raising her hand to his lips — for one is sorry to state that Anglomaniac has not yet generalized in France that charming mode of salutation which consists in squeezing a lady's hand and working it up and down like a pump-handle, — "the most perplexed of men, who comes to beg alms of you in the shape of advice," added he, proceeding to salute M^{lle}. Lucie, whom he lifted up and kissed.

"I dot a noo doll, une grande poupée,

avec bloo eyes, tu sais, monsieur," observed Miss Lucie, who, having a Scotch nurse and an English governess, spoke at times a very odd jumble of languages.

"Then Lucie had better leave us," said M^{me}. de Claire with an apologetic glance towards the little thing, who was the miniature portrait of herself. "You will find her terribly noisy if she remains. Put down the rest of the flowers, Lucie, and make your best curtsy to M. de Ris."

"Oh, Lucie and I are old friends," replied M. de Ris; "she shall sit on my knee;" and M^{lle}. Lucie, who foresaw that her withdrawal might lead to an hour's spelling lesson in the company of Miss Thompson, the governess, protested: "Je ne parlerai pas, maman, j'écouterai tout ce que le monsieur says."

On that understanding M^{lle}. Lucie was allowed to sit on the visitor's knee and play with his watch-chain, where the name "Pritchard," embossed on the locket, soon engaged her undivided attention. M^{me}. de Claire took her place on the sofa opposite a tambour frame, on which shone, half completed, one of those smart chasubles which French ladies fill their leisure by embroidering for the country clergy. M. de Ris then drew out the letter of the Great Personage, and handed it to the Baroness, beginning at the same time to unfold his most painful story.

"Then it is true?" said M^{me}. de Claire, returning him the letter with a smile after reading its contents; and making a slight inclination of the head, which might be construed into a congratulation. "I saw it announced in the papers, but it was only mentioned as a rumour."

"It is in the papers already!" exclaimed the Count in real consternation. "Then the matter is worse than I expected. They have done that in order to make it more difficult for me to refuse. But I shall not be caught for all that. I will refuse."

"You will refuse?" echoed the Baroness, quite quietly, and working at her chasuble.

"Why? Is not such your advice?" inquired the Count, a little astonished, and he unhooked his watch-chain to facilitate M^{lle}. Lucie's inspection.

"That must depend on the reasons you have to give," said she, raising her large, clear eyes, and fixing them on him interrogatively.

"P-R-I-T—Prit," broke in M^{lle}. Lucie, in a speculative whisper, "C-H-A-R-D—chat—Prit-chat"—(here a pause). "Dat is zoor cat's name: le chat Prit?" and

she softly nudged the Count's elbow. "Dis moi de quelle couleur il est, black or tabby ton chat Prit?"

The name of the missionary who was nearly being the cause of a war between France and England lisped out from between M^{lle}. Lucie's small lips acted like a clarion upon the distressed Count, waking him to sudden eloquence. M^{me}. de Claire wanted his reasons: he gave them her. Quickly, and with that fervour which fires us all when we speak of our own hardships, he sketched the unruffled life he had led hitherto, and grew pathetic about the proposal that tended to transform him in four-and-twenty hours from the happiest man in all Paris into the most wretched Cabinet Minister of all Europe. It was like a shell falling upon a pleasure villa; a blight settling upon a tree; a drug mingling with wine—anything that was unexpected, needless, and unkind. Why had they not appealed to one of those men who are constantly running after appointments, like a certain edible quadruped after truffles? There were plenty of them encumbering the Versailles lobbies—men who did not care for the jibes of the press nor blink koo-tooing to grocer-politicians, and whose consciences were not sensitive to a peccadillo more or less when it suited the public good, or their own. A minister should be a man with vigorous lungs, forward of speech, and impressed with the belief that Heaven had put him where he was to sit upon the public like a hair shirt, without paying heed to remonstrances. No man was fit to be a Minister who could not shed opportune tears over his own civic virtues, his integrity, his disinterestedness; and yet fight with desperate energy whenever an attempt was made to unseat him. Nobody had ever seen a Minister take his place in a Cabinet with the private wish to be relieved from his emoluments as soon as possible. This would be a breach of faith towards one's colleagues, a precedent likely to create confusion and bring the ministerial office into ridicule. Thus argued M. le Comte de Ris for the better part of a quarter-of-an-hour, whilst M^{me}. de Claire, continuing to embroider, listened patiently and attentively. M^{lle}. Lucie, less patient and attentive, slipped at an early stage of the argument off the Count's knees and went to fetch off the hearth-rug her Angora kitten, Minette, with a view to establishing points of comparison by-and-by between this much-favoured cat and the Count's own *chat Prit*.

"And now," said the Count, by manner

of conclusion, "I do hope you approve of all I have said; for I mean to be guided entirely by your advice as to the way in which I ought to decline this unreasonable offer."

The Baroness paused in her work and looked up.

"Well, there are two kinds of advices, my dear Count; the first of which I may call 'constitutional,' for it consists in coming with a set of resolutions already framed in one's own mind, and asking somebody simply to ratify them. If it be constitutional advice you want, then I say that your pleas are very humorous, and that you cannot do better than follow your own inclination. Only I think I would go in person to Versailles and state my reasons for refusing. It is more polite than writing. The other advice is the candid . . ." and with a slight smile Mdme. de Claire bent over her chasuble again.

"Please give me candid advice," answered the Count, after a moment's hesitation, and looking both resigned and miserable; "I could bear anything from you, even blame."

"My candid advice, then, is, that you should accept the offer," said Mdme. de Claire gently. "You say that you are dismayed at the unsettled condition of affairs? this is reason the more for lending your aid to calm us. You urge that you have not the qualities necessary for the post, that I think is excess of modesty."

The Count looked crushed.

"You cannot surely think it is my duty to set myself up as a butt for all the journalists and coffee-house orators of this scribbling chattering nation?" said he.

"Duty is a big word, and a man can only judge for himself where his duty lies. But if every man of education and influence refused to serve his country, what would become of us?"

"I risked my life without hesitation," broke in the Count, expostulating. "And I would give every franc of my fortune to-morrow, if it could do France any good."

"Life and money are the two things to which men of your rank hold least," answered Mdme. de Claire; "but supposing you were to sacrifice that for which you really do care — a little of your time, your habits, some of your comforts?"

She glanced up at him gaily, almost coaxingly, and her manner of speaking was so sensible and feeling, that he knew not what to say. In his inmost heart the conviction arose that having asked her advice so far, he was now bound to follow it; and this added to his embarrassment; but as

she proceeded to review, in her musical voice, all the objections he had raised, and found a pithy, well-put answer to each; another sentiment overshadowed the first, and he began dimly to discern a career of useful labour and fame opening to him, where at first he had seen only gloom and annoyance. After all, he was a man of birth, whose ancestors had at different times and in divers ways done service to the state; and he was the only one of his line who had set his heart's ambition on doing nothing. What was this but selfishness? He might veil his conduct under what paradoxes he pleased, his aversion to office was due to motives that were not very noble or very creditable. Of a sudden it occurred to him that in arguing him out of his apathy as she was doing, Mdme. de Claire must feel a certain amount of contempt for a man who needed thus to be spurred on to duties which a spirited mind would have undertaken at once with eagerness and pride. This thought flipped his Frenchman's vanity as with a whip, and he felt himself reddening to the roots of his hair. He was on the point of exclaiming that he saw it all now, and thanked his hostess for unsealing his eyes; but he was arrested by the reflection that he really and truly had no political opinions to use as a banner on commencing his official career, and this was certainly an impediment for political convictions are not extemporized in a minute like puns or riddles. However, it was in quite an altered and appeased tone that he urged this new difficulty, and said: "If I only had a belief in some system or other! By rights I ought to be a Bourbonist, but in that party faith is required, and a certain dash of fanaticism. To be an Orleanist one must needs believe in the panaceal virtues of Parliaments, whereas Parliaments have never cured anything in France. If I took to Bonapartism I should be obliged to agitate for plebiscitums — Heaven help me! — as if our last plebiscitum were not enough!"

"Then be a Republican," said Mdme. de Claire simply.

He started a little, for such a suggestion in Mdme. de Claire's mouth was unlooked for. Was this the brilliant courted Baroness whose husband's shield numbered so many quarterings that it looked like a harlequin's coat? He would have thought she was mocking him, but for her perfect gravity.

"Republicanism," she said, "is a word which we have converted into a bugbear because we have always associated it with noisy people. But why not try and make

of it the Government of France by all the most distinguished Frenchmen? I can scarcely myself in these times understand a man having any other aim. If it were only possible to restore the loyalty of the people such as it was in the days when they worshipped the king and touched his garments to be cured of diseases, then I should pray for the return of Henri V. But as this cannot be, and as the only kingship we seem able to tolerate is an expedient that has the bare name of royalty without any of its privileges or prestige, and which besides leads us into distracting revolutions every twenty years; why not adopt at once the form of government which agrees best with such theories as we still do respect: they are not many, but they are good: individual merit, equality and the popular will?"

He was quite surprised, though not disagreeably.

"I have often thought myself," he rejoined, "what a blessing it would be if we could sink our differences into a common system that would bring all parties into co-operation. But Republicanism has never succeeded anywhere, not even in the United States, where it is corruption organized, and where it will collapse as soon as the country is peopled enough and respectable enough to wish for honest institutions. The constitution of England seems the utmost to which we can aspire, though I do not even see how we are to found that."

"Nor shall we," answered Mdme. de Claire. "England is England, and the Liberal papers there call the Queen 'her Most Gracious Majesty'; until our own Opposition journals do the same I cannot see what hope there is of copying a state of things which is based on religious reverence for the sovereign; it would be like trying to make a watch without the mainspring. As to Republicanism," added she, with a touch of patriotic pride that was not without spirit, "I think we are a great nation enough, my dear Count, to set precedents instead of following them. Republicanism has failed up to this moment because you noblemen instead of regarding it as the government of all have treated it as a mere party. You have given it over to be championed by all the most vexing people in the country, and then you complain of it having such unmannerly advocates! Why not be Republicans yourselves, and study to make Republicanism properly understood: there is no form of government under which your influence would be greater or more respected? For as you may suppose I am not advocating a Republic with Mr.

Rhetorician this or Mr. Iconoclast that at its head, and a whole attendant train of supporters fresh from the tavern. That is the caricature of Republicanism. My Republic would be the rule of talent and merit under all its forms. No man should be exiled because he was a prince, nor excluded from the chance of honour because he was poor. There should be liberty of speech and pen for all; dukes and counts should bear their titles if it pleased them, though no more empty distinctions should be conferred, and the only difference between this Republicanism and Monarchy would be that instead of setting over us a privileged family to rule by dint of perpetual *coups-d'état* and amid constant panics, you gentlemen, who would make up two legislative chambers, should elect periodically the most eminent man among you to govern the country for so many years according to your directions. I am sure that under such a system as this, that is with Republicanism put under the safeguard of birth and genius, the fussy agitators who are now the high priests of the party would be reduced to making themselves royalists to attract public attention."

The debate, which grew more and more one-sided and more and more convincing to the one who played the passive part in it, was prolonged during a few minutes until interrupted by Mdle. Lucie, who emerging from behind the sofa with the cat Minette in her arms took it up to the Count and laid it on his knees, saying with becoming seriousness: "Dis moi, is he aussi blanc que this your cat Prit?"

"What does Lucie mean by your cat Prit?" asked Mdme. de Claire, amused.

The Count explained, laughing, to what uses he had put the clerical name of Pritchard, and then taking off his watch-chain completely, he wound it two or three times round Mdle. Lucie's plump and pink little wrist: it made a pretty bracelet.

"I have no further use for it now," he said, "and you must keep it, Lucie, as a souvenir of what your mamma did for an incorrigible idler—taught him that we are here to work and not always to please ourselves."

"Then I shall next hear from you at Versailles," observed Mdme. de Claire, with an expression of very pardonable pleasure at the success her arguments had wrought.

Mdle. Lucie, one is compelled to state, had vanished behind the sofa with a forefinger in her mouth and her eyes fixed upon her trinket as if she apprehended being bidden to return it.

"I am like a knight you will have armed for the fray," answered the Count, rising to go. "I have both sword and banner."

"And I am certain you will distinguish yourself in the lists," she rejoined kindly.

"I could not but act well," he said, "if I had always at hand an adviser like yourself."

His voice was somewhat earnest as he bowed.

She blushed very slightly, and he took his leave. On his way from Beaupré to his own park, and thence, an hour later, to the railway station, John, the groom, noticed that he handled his horses with much greater tenderness than he had done that morning. As for M. Narcisse, the valet, he noticed nothing; for having heard from the Count's own lips that it was his intention to accept the seat in the Cabinet offered him, that excellent servant was wrapped in meditation as to whether it would not be more politic before urging the claims of his relatives on the Government to solicit of that power (in his master's person) something for himself—say a snug bureau de tabac in a good quarter of Paris, or a place on the customs with a furnished house, a salary of three thousand francs a year, and perquisites?

III.

WHEN the appointment of M. le Comte de Ris to the Ministership of the Cochinchina colonies became an authentic fact, duly notified to the world in the columns of the *Journal Officiel*, the event gave rise to much discussion. It was at a critical moment when the public mind, uncertain as to whether the Government were leaning towards monarchy or the opposite extreme, looked anxiously for the first appointment which should furnish a precise indication. As it was, the appointment furnished nothing, and was consequently, from the official point of view, an extremely clever move. Half the journals in Paris were convinced that the Count was a Monarchist; the other half were equally persuaded that he was a Republican. Controversies of great bitterness, and in which much irony was lavished, were waged on this subject between rival prints; and then the newspapers of each inimical section took to fighting pleasantly among themselves as to which exact shade of Monarchism or Republicanism the new Minister belonged to. This lasted a week, during which the illustrated sheets published portrait en-

gravings of him, and the photographers stuck his cartes-de-visite in their windows at one franc apiece. Provincial and foreign journalists also called to beg for biographical details; and an "Own Correspondent" from New York appeared one morning at breakfast-time to interview him through the nose, and ask whether he were any relation to Count de Ris, who had fought under Lafayette, and either beaten or been beaten by the English. Then, this inaugurative hubbub over, the public folded its arms and waited patiently to see the Cochinchina Minister at work.

This work was of necessity, at first, occult. As the Assembly was not sitting, no opportunity existed for a public display, and after the Count had received his portfolio at the hands of the President, made his bow to M^{me}. Thiers, and exchanged visits with all his colleagues in the Cabinet, he had nothing important to do but to take formal possession of his two official residences at Versailles and in Paris. A certain degree of solemnity usually attends these installations, and the Count found the whole staff of his office, marshalled in dress-coats and white ties, to receive him. Truth to say, he was not in very good spirits. He had felt sad on leaving his luxurious rooms on the Boulevard Malesherbes for the bleak apartments which the nation put at his disposal in the Palace of Versailles; and though M. Narcisse had assured him with some elation that no less a person than Louis XV. had once slept in the chamber where he was going to rest, this piece of glory had cheered him but slightly. Then a sigh had escaped him at beholding on a wall, as he drove along, the Gymnase playbill announcing the *Visite de Noces*. He had not yet seen this last play of Dumas, and if it had not been for his official dignity he should have been going to dine snugly at the Café Anglais that night, then afterwards to the Gymnase, and between the acts he should have gone behind the scenes to compliment M^{lle}. Desclée, and have a quarter-of-an-hour's chat with M^{lles}. Pierson and Massin. He was, further, painfully impressed by the awe-stricken look which fell on the countenance of the sentry who saluted him as he alighted. He was not accustomed to see people so horribly frightened as this at his approach.

However, state is state, and the clerks in the reception-room looked very stately. There were clerks of every shape, magnitude, and denomination—head clerks, first clerks, second clerks, third clerks,

assistant clerks, supernumerary clerks, copying clerks; in short, more than the pen can enumerate; and all these clerks bowed like one clerk as he dawned magisterially upon their eyesight. To his left walked the Under-Secretary of State for the Cochin China department, a middle-aged Parliamentarian of great tongue power, who had been very strong on the estimates during its Opposition days, but had somewhat neglected this branch ever since his own salary had been included in the budget. This fellow-worker acted as his master of the ceremonies, and whispered names as they sidled along. The Count strove generously by his own urbane demeanour to provoke something like a sign of life and welcome on the starched faces of the sea of subordinates, but the effort was vain, and the chilliness of the whole scene so reacted on him that he felt his backbone becoming ironized like that of a provincial mayor who has received the honour of knighthood. At that minute he thanked Heaven that the photographers who sold him for tenpence on the Boulevards were not behind to knock off a new set of portraits; for, catching sight of himself in a glass, he thought he had never looked so stiff and ridiculous. He had no leisure, though, to pursue his reflections on this topic any further, for by this time he had come to the end of the clerks and reached a spot where stood, mingling with the clerks, and yet distinct from them, as who should say a steeple forming part of the church, and yet overtopping it, a man of venerable mien, with a smooth bald head, who made obeisance to him with humble yet collected courtesy.

Impossible to look more imposing than this hairless veteran, who resembled an image of Nestor, king of the Pylans, shaved and in modern garb. Deep reverence, not unmingled with dread, was observable in the Parliamentary Secretary's manner as he introduced him:—"The Permanent Irresponsible Under Secretary, Monsieur Jobus."

The Count had never heard of the permanent and irresponsible M. Jobus; but a man who has never heard tell of a sphinx is not the less moved at the sight of one. M. Jobus was the Cochin China office in septuagenarian form. People in the outer world talked of the Cochin China office, its doings, its mistakes; but they laboured under a wrong impression. That office was M. Jobus; its doings were his doings, its mistakes were his—no, its mistakes were those of the Parliamentary Under

Secretary, or of the Parliamentary Minister, both responsible. M. Jobus as above-said was irresponsible. Ministries might fall and dynasties go away by train, but M. Jobus remained where he was. Now and then the wrong-headed public would get up with the notion that things were being done at the Cochin China office which ought not to be done; and there would be an agitation about it in the papers, then speeches about it in the legislature, finally splits about it in the Cabinet, resulting in the retirement of some Cochin China Minister and his parliamentary henchman. But after this matters would go on at the Cochin China office exactly as they had done before, because in dismissing the Minister and his henchman people had overlooked M. Jobus, which was as if the passengers of the ship that bore Jonah to Tarshish had thrown the captain overboard but overlooked Jonah. In dealing with the affairs of the nation, of the office, or with his own affairs personally, M. Jobus always seemed to bear in mind the golden fact that he was permanent and irresponsible. If anybody belonging to the office fell athwart him, M. Jobus visited him with his displeasure, and this is what would then sometimes happen:—The person visited by the permanent irresponsibility of M. Jobus would appeal to M. Jobus's responsible chief; but as this gentleman, being not permanent but fleeting, seldom knew much or indeed anything of office matters, he would refer back the appeal to M. Jobus for particulars; in other words ask for M. Jobus's opinion on his own judgment. And this might happen several times over, so that frequently a person who held in his possession five or six epistolary condemnations from successive Cochin China Ministers would virtually possess but one reply—that dictated and redictated by M. Jobus who had acted in the matter as prosecutor, judge of first instance, judge of first appeal, and judge of final appeal. One is happy to add, however, that M. Jobus was a functionary highly appreciated by all who had ever been brought into harmonious contact with him. People had even been heard to speculate as to what the Cochin China office would ever do if deprived of his services; for indeed, men like M. Jobus are not manufactured out of hand in a day. They can only be produced by a long, most delicately nurtured and most carefully guarded career of irresponsibility.

The Count gazed for a few seconds at Monsieur Jobus as if an inward voice told

him that here was an official of greater weight than appeared on the surface; then by way of beginning an acquaintance, he said he would always rely on M. Jobus's zeal — at which M. Jobus bowed; that he put the greatest confidence in M. Jobus's abilities — M. Jobus bowed anew; and that he hoped often to have the pleasure of seeing M. Jobus again, whereupon there was a rustling down the whole line of clerks, like the shaking of aspen leaves set in motion by the wind. Somehow the Count could not help imagining there was a symptom of ironical mirth in this rustling. It reminded him of the diabolical notes which accompany the mild-worded serenade in *Don Giovanni*.

The presentation being over, the new Minister was about to pass into his study, but the Parliamentary Secretary, taking alarm, whispered that it would be contrary to all usage not to make a speech. A speech — why a speech? What could the Count have to say to all these gentlemen who were eyeing him as if he were somebody admitted on sufferance, and intruding rather unwarrantably, on the whole, into their comfortable midst? However, the hungry expression in the stare of the clerks and the expectant air on the physiognomy of M. Jobus, told so plainly that without oratory of some sort the day's programme would be considered incomplete, that he stood still and in a polite conversational tone said:

"GENTLEMEN, — I shall not forget that which I am persuaded is the guiding maxim of your own conduct, that we are the servants of the public, and should make it a point of honour to discharge the duties confided to us in the fullest way we honestly can. If we bear this in mind, and are conscientious as regards the quality of our labour as well as its quantity, I have every hope that on the day we part we shall do so mutually pleased with one another."

This was not quite the kind of speech that had been expected, and it caused a moment's astonishment. However, allowances must be made for a Minister new to his work. The venerable M. Jobus started an applauding murmur, and all the clerks echoed the applauding murmur, the Parliamentary Under Secretary chiming in with a sonorous "Good, good," such as those he delivered in the House, when official persons were holding forth. Nevertheless, the more did the venerable and irresponsible M. Jobus ponder upon the speech of his new chief, once the latter had withdrawn, the less did he like it. That

reference to the public was singularly inelicitous. What had the public to do with the Cochinchina office? Other Ministers, when they made inaugural harangues, began with a compliment to their predecessors, which was a courtly custom and innocuous, that ought not lightly to be set aside. Then they extolled the institutions under which they were living, cautioned their hearers against the perils of anarchy, and wound up with the promise that they would be the fathers of all the clerks, and subalterns in their departments. M. Jobus had seen full a score of Ministers come and go who had been fathers to the Cochinchina office; and this sort of eloquence wrought no evil. It was easily digestible, like good pastry — very different from allusions to the "quantity" and "quality" of labour, the honest discharge of conscientious duties, and so on. M. Jobus fancied he felt something disquietingly hard under this speech. He had read of iron hands covered with velvet gloves, and, though he had never met with such a thing, he opined it must have some such touch as this. His usual peace of mind was far from restored when, an hour after the speech, the Minister commanded his attendance to learn from him the current business of the office.

He found the Count already at work, opening despatches and fresh primed with information which the Parliamentary Secretary had given him. This Parliamentary Secretary made his exit as M. Jobus entered, and then the Count, motioning his new interlocutor to a handsome and uncomfortable chair with an eighteenth century back, listened with great patience, and with more than expedient interest, for a space exceeding two hours to all that he had to say. Fresh Ministers are usually inquisitive, but not, sighed M. Jobus, to this extent. The Permanent Irresponsible was surprised, taken aback, and gradually alarmed to the depths of his soul by the probing nature of the questions which the new Minister put, by his minuteness in having every detail elaborately explained before passing on to the next one, by his evident intention, in a word, to master all the items of his departmental labours thoroughly, just as if it was he who meant to be everything in the Cochinchina House instead of M. Jobus! The fact is, the Count had not accepted office for his amusement, and, as often happens with men who have never done a stroke of work all their days, he was bringing to bear on his new occupations the reserves of energy accumulated during a lifetime. Such men are a curse and a bitterness to any department

where they introduce themselves. M. Jobus had seen no lack of Ministers evince an ardour for reform on accession to power, but this was usually no more than a flash in the pan, a brief mania that subsided under the temperate influence of official atmosphere; nay, it was one of the curious facts of M. Jobus's experience that the more a Minister had talked of reform before obtaining office the less did he dwell on the subject afterwards—which was perfectly natural; for when a man has waded through a certain amount of sloppy country to reach a given height, his chief preoccupation on arriving is to change his boots, and to dismiss, as soon as possible from his mind, all the trying incidents of the journey. Besides, reforming Ministers are generally taken up when they first come to power by the material comforts and dignities of their new position—the being housed, and having one's letters posted at the expense of the tax-payer, the being able to say: "Put more coals on the fire, Auguste," without inward pangs as to coals costing sixty francs the ton; the wearing of gold-laced swallow-tails, and seeing pretty women in drawing-rooms wreath their faces in smiles at one's approach—with many other little nicenesses equally new and gratifying. But Ministers of Count de Ris's rank and fortune who have never had to bemoan the price of fuel and stationery, look upon power as a field for active exertions, which exertions, in the case of clear and comparatively young minds, are apt to assume a shape extremely fatiguing for those who are pressed into forced co-operation. M. Jobus had already had occasion to observe this during the occupancy of a Marquis who had worked two private secretaries on to the verge of brain fever, and during that of a Viscount who had caused him, M. Jobus, much mental anguish by his love of statistics. But both these noblemen had, after all, confined their exuberant diligence to questions of great state interest. M. de Ris was the first Minister whom M. Jobus had ever seen show that Frederick-the-Great-like disposition, to interfere in those minutiae of the office which M. Jobus had, theretofore, regarded as his private, sanctified domain.

"There seems to me to be a great many clerks?" remarked the Count, when he had pumped the irresponsible M. Jobus pretty nearly dry.

"Does your Excellency think so?" replied M. Jobus, for it was a rule with that esteemed public servant never to commit himself to a downright statement either affirmative or negative.

"They struck me as very numerous. Could you give me any idea of their approximate number?"

"I could not venture to speak with any certitude, M. le Comte," answered M. Jobus, deprecatingly, the implied corollary being: "These questions really afflict me beyond measure, your Excellency."

"Well, I should hold it a favour, M. Jobus," said the Count, "if you would kindly have a tabular list drawn up, stating the exact number of clerks, their salaries, the dates of their appointments, and the nature and amount of work allotted to each. At a time when France is bleeding at all her veins, you must agree with me, that not a centime ought to be spent more than there is any necessity for. And I take this opportunity of begging that you will direct those whom it may concern, that my personal expenses, firing, lighting, furniture repairs, and the wages of the ushers and messengers who specially attend on me are not to be entered in the office accounts. I intend to defray all such myself. Thank you, meanwhile, for your very lucid information."

M. Jobus shivered from head to feet, and retired, not knowing, for the first time in his life, on what limbs of his venerable person he was walking. And that evening the news went forth through clerkdom that the new Minister for the Cochinchina department was a man bent on innovation. If you can imagine a Cingalese rising amid an assembly of Buddhists, and declaring unexpectedly that the tooth of the fourth Boodh, Gaudama, which all the faithful worship with exemplary fervour, was cut from the tusk of a hog; or a mandarin of Peking denying in a conclave of his peers, that the Constellation of the Great Dog appeared in the year 647 before the Christian era, and dictated his maxims to Confucius, you may realize the sort of consternation produced by this announcement.

From The Spectator.

VESUVIUS IN ERUPTION.

[We have received the following lively account of the eruption of Vesuvius from a friend, being extracts from a letter from Naples.—*Ed. Spectator.*]

... This long while past, the mountain has been slightly eruptive, and little thin streams of lava would run down from the crater, now at one side and now at another and glow through the night; but they never went further than the foot of the cone,

and mostly cooled at once, and were no longer to be seen the night following; at other times, one could only see a flame shoot up now and then from the summit and disappear, which we called "Vesuvius smoking his cigar." Early last week, however, the spectacle became much finer. On Wednesday night the whole top of the cone appeared encircled with fire, and from the mass lava streams descended on all sides, while three craters at the summit continually threw red-hot stones high into the air, which glanced through the smoke and fell in sparkling showers, to be hurled again aloft. On Thursday evening much the same spectacle was to be seen, and many people ascended the mountain to obtain a nearer view, and thus it was that many perished; for as they were advancing in all apparent security to where one of the small lava streams was flowing, the mountain-side suddenly opened from top to bottom, lava flowed out and surrounded some; others were struck down and horribly burned by red-hot stones, and were with difficulty rescued, in some cases only to die in hospitals afterwards.

It is not known how many perished. Very exaggerated accounts were current at first, and it was said many foreigners were among the missing; but this is, I believe, not correct, as it was afterwards stated that nobody was missing from the various hotels. The news of this disaster reached Naples early on last Friday, and threw the city into alarm, which was soon immensely increased by observing the mountain enveloped on all sides in dense smoke, which towered gigantically into the sky, and from the heart of which deep rumblings proceeded at intervals, like salvos of distant artillery. These bellowings soon increased in violence, and gradually merged into an unceasing roar, which even at Naples caused the atmosphere to tremble, and the very earth to vibrate. A. was on the roof of our town dwelling looking at the mountain through a glass, when suddenly everything trembled with a mighty roar, and she saw the mountain open low down below the Observatory, flames dart high into the air, seen even in the daylight, and then arise the dark, huge column of smoke and ashes that, circling majestically aloft, indicates the presence below of a new eruptive crater. This, from its position, might seriously menace Santo Jorio, so she instantly rushed off to tell her mother and then call me. Meanwhile, I, at the office, hearing the mountain roaring, went out to see what was going on. I reached the

Largo Municipio, near home, whence a full view of the mountain was obtainable. By daylight lava at a distance only shows smoke, but from the position on the mountain of the various lines of smoke, I saw at once that we ought to be off without delay to the Casino to carry off what we could, if it should prove necessary. I found E. already going, and after giving the necessary directions for porters and carts to come out at once, I followed with A. G., who is now staying with us. I drove a pony of my own, and I think he was as much excited as ourselves about the eruption, for he kicked and almost run away, but I got him behind another carriage, and so got along. As we advanced, the roaring of the mountain began to be heard above the noise of the crowd of carriages, and now the stream of fugitives from all the villages round the mountain met us; carts heaped with household furniture, men carrying heavy loads, women with their children, old and young, rich and poor, all fleeing while there was yet time, for later on where would the means of transport be found? The panic was indescribable, the horrid bellowing having demoralized the population more than anything else; for never, in the memory of living man, had it been heard before, and who could say what it might pretend? As we got on we overtook large bodies of police, gendarmes, and troops hurrying to the most menaced points to help and keep order, and good service they did; then long lines of the transport-corps waggons pressing forward in the same direction. All the omnibuses of Naples were seized and sent off to gather in the fugitives; the train ran gratis, the Admiralty sent steamers down the coast to help in that direction. Racchia was in command of these, and the municipalities in Naples and in all the surrounding districts prepared lodging and food for those who would need them. The King and the authorities were on the spot. We soon got to the turn up to Santo Jorio, and here the National Guards were turning back the merely curious, for the roads must be kept free for the fugitives and their goods. I was known, and passed without hindrance. Having found that there was no immediate danger to the Casino, I went off with A. G. on foot to get a nearer view of the lava. Just at the foot of the mountain, separated once by a valley, stood the villages of Massa and Santo Sebastiano; in 1855, a lava stream flowed between them, and left a mountain where the valley once lay. I now found the lava coming down the

same track, and already, in an incredibly short time, it had reached within gunshot of the villages, menacing both. There it was, the fiery stream oozing along like molten metal laden with scoriae, that fell over and over as it rolled more than house-high along, with deadly, irresistible might. It reached a tree, the tree burst into flame; it touched a house, a heap of smoking ruins was all that remained to disappear into the great, black, heaving, smoking sea of destruction. A deep quarry lay in its way; it slowly approached the edge, the people paused in awe, and a great shout went up as the first fiery wave heaved over and plunged below, a cataract of molten fire and great glowing rocks poured in for a few minutes, and the quarry was filled, and the mighty mass rolled undiminished on. Meanwhile, in both villages all was confusion; all the carts that could be got stood in the streets, and all the wretched peasants' household goods were hurriedly piled on them, and as hurriedly driven away; for soon the lava will have cut the road. Some had already fled, and their houses were shut; others were wildly flinging everything into the street, to be ready for their turn with the carts; others, having made bundles of the best they had, were carrying them off on their heads, fathers, mothers, and little ones fleeing together. Then might be seen a fat proprietor of a menaced villa, recognizable by the great door-key protruding from his coat-tail pocket, haggling with porters for the removal of his furniture, and while they haggled the lava came down and rendered farther dispute useless; and here was a woman silently weeping, and there one shouting aloud to her patron saint, whose image she had hung out of window, to keep off the ruthless enemy; and over the shouting of the men, and the weeping of the women, and the calling to each other, and the voices of the drivers as they urged on their horses, came ever and incessantly the thundering roar of the mountain. And now the road is cut, and the carts have to take by-paths, soon also to be intercepted; and then the police push back the crowd, and the lava is at the houses, and first one falls and then another; the "fat proprietor's" villa is gone, and his big door-key useless. But what is that shout and rush? The lava has reached a house, when on the terrace appears a woman screaming for help. She wanted to rescue yet another bundle, and her retreat is cut off; the lava is rising against the walls, and soon all will be a ruin and she wrings her hands wildly, and

a shout is raised, "a ladder, a ladder!" and the crowd fall back, and the police hurry on a few brave fellows carrying one between them; it is placed against the tottering house, a brave man (he is a common soldier) rushes up, and brings down the almost senseless woman, not a minute too soon, for with a rumble the house falls, and the lava occupies its place. But see! It advances no more; it has turned, it passes on down to the plain, to new destruction, but the rest of the village is saved. Leaving this point, I went to see the stream that was menacing Santo Jorio. There the scene was widely different. The lava was advancing over much the same ground it had gone over in the last eruption; was destroying nothing, for it had nothing to destroy; it was widening out excessively; the frontage on which it was advancing being perhaps a mile wide, and for that very reason it was creeping on excessively slowly; while, on the contrary, several other streams were advancing rapidly in different directions. I therefore came to the conclusion that Santo Jorio ran no immediate peril, and would probably escape altogether; and so it turned out, for while the Santo Sebastiano stream ran between four and five miles in the twenty-four hours, the Santo Jorio one did not run half a mile in the same time.

We then turned towards home, and on our way the sun set; and now was to be seen a sight of rare beauty, as his dying rays cast a rosy tint over the mountain, and piles of smoke and vapour, rising mass upon mass above it, while below began to glow the lava's lurid fire, and from the summit columns of fiery stones rent the towering mass, shooting 1,300 metres high from the crater's edge. At the Casino we found dinner awaiting us, but, to say truth, I had but little appetite. As I saw I should not be wanted at the Casino, I was very desirous to get back to Naples, where I knew A. and the children would be extremely anxious as long as I was away. Along the road there was the same "confusion, worse confounded" by the darkness; but I got home all safe. The mountain was, at this time, a sublime and wonderful spectacle; half shrouded in the smoke that rose from all its sides, it seemed of more than usual height; a great stream of glowing lava descended on the left, and plunging down a precipice in waves of liquid fire, could be traced far out into the plain, its dull red glare lightened at intervals by the more yellow flame of burning houses; a similar stream on the right traced the curves of the mountain in that

direction, while at the base the great stream that menaced Santo Jorio and all the plain below could be traced in its majestic breadth; other minor streams of fire furrowed the mountain in different directions; while above, the majestic pile of vapour was divided by the ever renewed column of flame and incandescent stones, which, after shooting to unknown heights, might be seen falling in showers of brilliant sparks and rolling down the mountain side. . . . Next morning, Saturday, the lava in every direction had almost stopped flowing, but the roaring continued unabated. In the course of the day the lava stopped entirely. When we awoke on Sunday morning, although long after sunrise, it was still dark; it was raining ashes, and a thick, dark stratum covered everything. As the day advanced, it was a most melancholy one; the sun at times struggled out in a sickly manner, Vesuvius was shrouded by an impenetrable veil of vapour, from within which the ceaseless grumble continued to shake the heavy air. Ashes and dust were everywhere, closed windows did not keep them out; everything was gritty, ashes were in your eyes, nose, ears, and mouth; you eat them with your food, drank them with your drink, and inhaled them with your breath; the streets were silent, for the ashes deadened the sounds of the wheels; few people were about, and those with umbrellas pressed closely over their heads, and constantly wiping their eyes, — it was a queer sight, we all looked like dustmen. The next day was worse, for a high wind drove the ashes everywhere, and then they penetrated where they had stayed away before, if indeed there were any such places. On Tuesday the wind ceased, but it rained instead, and as water and sand make mud, it literally rained mud, so where ashes were before now was mud; and still Vesuvius, shrouded in gloom growled unceasingly, and still the fear of earthquake haunted the timid, but only a few very slight shocks were felt. Yesterday, at last, things cleared. The wind changed, and the ashes, if any, were carried elsewhere. The mountain was silent, the lava black, the sun shone out, people went about as usual, the peasants began returning to their homes, and in Naples a general clearing began to take place; in short, although to-day we have again a sprinkling of ashes, the great eruption of 1872 may be said to be at an end.

From The Spectator.
THE CONDITION OF SPAIN.

NOTHING can be more troubled, or insecure, or disorderly than the condition of Spain according to English ideas. It is quite evident, in spite of all the telegrams, and official reports, and letters from correspondents, that the Carlist insurrection is not put down, and quite possible also, in spite of written denials, that the Spanish Socialists may break loose from the control of the Republican statesmen, and try conclusions with the Captains-General by the sword. The peasantry, as we have pointed out for years, are full of agrarian discontents, desiring a tenant-right much more complete than that of Ireland; while the cities are honeycombed with socialism, the feeling between masters and men rising often to mutual and bloodthirsty detestation. Nevertheless, threatening as the state of affairs may appear to be on the surface, we question if we do not in this country unconsciously exaggerate the immediate political danger. Modern Europe north of the Pyrenees and the Alps has almost forgotten, to begin with, how to estimate insurrection. For sixty years we have not in Germany, France or England seen a true country insurrection, the rising of a province in resistance to the State, the attempt of a country population to defy the Government, seize all local resources, and drive back or baffle the regular troops. Roads have become too numerous, the peasantry or landlords too comfortable, society too tranquil, for attempts like that of La Vendée to resist the general action of France. Insurrection in the old sense has become so improbable, that we forget when it occurs how very little it can effect, and how very difficult, at the same time, it is to put down. If the people of provinces like Navarre, Biscay, or in a less degree Catalonia are inclined to "rise" there is nothing to prevent them. They have only to assemble in arms, — "arms" meaning long carbines — seize the small towns, occupy the passes, and intercept the railway communication, and there seems as once to be a formidable revolt. And it is formidable, as far as cost and annoyance are concerned, for it must be put down, and troops unless excessively numerous can hardly accomplish the work. They can seize a pass, losing a few men; but when they have seized it, their opponents are all up the mountains, beyond pursuit except by scattered parties, who find only villagers, looking as innocent and as stupid as the fishes. They can retake the villages called in such places towns, losing a

few more men; but the bands who occupy them only melt away, or fly to the nearest point of vantage, whence if unpursued they descend again. There are no arsenals to occupy, no stores to appropriate, no lines of communication to disturb. The insurgents want nothing but flour and powder, move generally on their feet, and seldom possess so much as a piece of artillery. Submissions mean nothing, for those who submit stipulate that they shall go home and do not keep there; and victories mean nothing, for the vanquished are not frightened by their defeat. Even disarmament is nearly useless, for the Legitimists of France send in more arms over the frontier. Pursuing insurgents in a country like Navarre or brigands in a country like Navarre is terrible work for soldiers, for they die and die by twos and threes, and get worn out with marching and night work and bad commissariat, and never see any result adequate to their efforts; and terrible work for the Treasury, which must find and move some kind of supplies. On the other hand, we must not forget that the result to the insurgents is always a very small one. They cannot get at the real Government. They cannot venture to attack the cities. They cannot inflict a defeat large enough to strike the imagination of the Army. They cannot plunder the plains or go anywhere where horsemen or shells could reach them. No insurrection of modern times was more formidable than that of La Vendée, which lasted years and cost thousands of trained soldiers, but it had no influence whatever upon the general course of affairs. Navarre and Biscay may go on fighting in the same way for months, and still they will make no impression on Madrid, or carry Don Carlos an inch further forward to his throne, or effect anything except crippling the Treasury, and making the Army bitterly hostile to the cause which involves so much bloodshed and danger with so little return. This, the bitter feeling excited among soldiers by suffering, is one of the incurable difficulties of insurgents, and is nowhere so fatal to them as in Spain, where the soldiery nearly if not completely dispose of the supreme power, and must be attracted before a Revolution can be successful. The only plan left to insurgents in such a case is to whittle the Army down, and this has been the danger in Spain against which the new levy is intended to guard. That levy, however, will arrive too soon for the effect of depletion to be sufficient to be of political account.

The difficulties of Republican *émeutes* are nearly as great, though in a different way. In Spain the populace of the great cities, which is very brave, very fanatic, and very full of socialist ideas, can always seize the cities for a moment, and so place Government in serious peril, because if left in peace the popular leaders could organize ruling juntas or committees, obtain revenue, and perhaps compel concessions to their ideas. In a smaller way they have most of the advantages for revolt possessed by the people of the Southern States of America, namely, a working machinery, through which to control and organize a mass of well-wishers into soldiers, and a general impression, arising from the traditional independence of the provinces, that such machinery ought to be obeyed. But, on the other hand, to begin operations the Republicans must seize the cities, or they gain no physical force; and the Spanish Generals have of late years been driven into most dreadful but most successful methods of holding cities down. The Spanish soldiery, though extremely good, brave, temperate, and obedient, have never been very numerous, and since the revolt in Cuba have been too few for the ordinary wants of the country. After Dulce had started for Cuba Prim found he had barely sixty thousand men on paper, or 50,000 available, and of these he was compelled to concentrate 16,000 about Madrid. It was impossible to "garrison" a dozen great cities, the fortresses, and Biscay properly with the remainder, and he was obliged, therefore, to call science unscrupulously to his aid, and shell rebels, at the risk of involving the innocent with the guilty. The plan, carried out remorselessly in one conspicuous instance, succeeded so completely that the Captains-General now threaten it to every city which rises, and *émeute* without the soldiery has become nearly if not quite impossible. The Spanish artillery is splendid, nearly every town is commanded from some height or from the sea, and men with smooth-bores in their hands might as well contend against angels or demons as against a rain of shells to which they cannot make even the semblance of a reply. The moment Governments have reached such a point of recklessness that they will destroy a city rather than suffer an *émeute*, civil populations become powerless, and must perforce submit to the laws until a movement among the soldiery again sets them free.

We cannot think, therefore, that failing a military revolt, the Government of Spain is in danger just yet of being overset, and

of a military revolt there is as yet no sign. There may be one, for there is no doubt that the feeling against "the stranger" is strong, and Serrano cannot rid himself of his prejudice in favour of Alphonso; but the probability is that there will be none, and that King Amadeo will in a few weeks find himself in a much stronger position than he has yet occupied. The respectable classes are terribly frightened about Socialism. The Army has fought in his name, and admires the remarkable personal courage which enables him to move about Madrid as if assassination had never been heard of in Spain; and he is about to obtain complete control of the Cortes. The Ministry, we are told, unable to defend or even to palliate the means by which they have carried about a third of the elections, intend to ask for a Bill of indemnity, on the avowed ground that they could not with a hostile majority save Spain from another revolution; and the Radicals, unable to accept or resist this bill, and unwilling to declare against the monarchy, intend to retire. The Ministry will then be absolute, and a happy inspiration may yet induce them or the King to secure a real hold upon the people by conceding the one demand they earnestly press. If there is one thing certain in Spanish politics, where all is so uncertain, it is that the masses of the people desire the revival of local liberties, that they do not care particularly who governs at the centre, but do care about the *Fueros* or provincial charters which the Carlists and Federalist Republicans alike promise shall be restored. There seems no reason why they should not be granted, modified by modern ideas, and the King nevertheless remain master of the Army, the Treasury, and the foreign policy of the country, just as he would if he were President of Castelar's Republic. Federal monarchy is just as possible as Federal republicanism, and to an Italian prince must be one of the most intelligible ideas. All this, however, is in the future; for the present, it seems certain that the Central Government, though harassed by village rebellions in the north and threatened by Republican rebels in the great cities, is not in serious danger from either party, is not exposed to dangerous attack within the Cortes, and will shortly, for a few months at all events, be able to legislate at its own discretion. Whether it will use that power wisely or foolishly is another affair, the great want of Spain for the hour being the want which has hampered her for two hundred years, the want of a man who, having the

strength to rule her, will rule unselfishly. Prim had the strength, but Prim could never forget himself.

From The Saturday Review.
ITALY AT WORK.

THERE is probably no European country about which English opinion is so strangely ignorant or unjust as about Italy. Partly, no doubt, this arises from the natural reaction after the burst of sympathy with which we recognized the rise of Italian freedom. To people who had been watching the daring policy of Cavour or the romantic exploits of Garibaldi, there was something of an anti-climax in finding as the upshot of the great tragedy a few cautious statesmen quietly biding their hour, and a Parliament which wasted half its time in silly declamation. But in a far greater degree the injustice is owing to a radical misconception of the Italian character itself. In the ordinary English mind there is a very simple conception of Italy as the land of bandits and painters. The Englishman who goes a shade further in general knowledge adds to this a few sentimental impressions about Italian poetry and Italian song. It is a little provoking to persons duly furnished with their Murray and this compendious stock of common notions to find this traditional Italy nowhere. The brigand has been hunted down like a wolf. The monk has vanished from the cloister. Police are beginning to make the very *lazzaroni* move on. The stiletto of drama and fiction only lingers in much the same sorts of haunts as those which befriend the knife of our own Ratcliff Highway. But what is far worse is the discovery that in the land of poetry and song there is hardly a tolerable painter or a living composer of distinguished merit. Even in literature the vehement outburst of thirty years ago has been followed by as violent a reaction. Manzoni still lives, but the school which once promised to spring up around him has died down into a scanty crop of novelists only worthy of the *Family Herald*. There are still poets indeed by the score, but there is absolutely no poetry. It is easy, after jotting down a few discoveries of this sort, for the English sympathizer to add to them a few little vignettes of loungers at their caffè, or "*jeunesse dorée*" idling in the sunshine, and to pronounce with a peremptory decision that Italy is dead. Not only is this untrue, but it is the very reverse of

truth. Italy is not only not dead, but it is just beginning to show signs of a more intense life than it has known since the age of Dante. But then it is by no means a life of poetry or the picturesque.

So far indeed is Italy from being the "land of singing and of dancing slaves," or freemen, which Pope and our usual impressions paint it, that the most striking characteristic of the Italian temper in all ages has been its faculty of combining, as no other race has ever combined, the practical element with the poetic, the most vivid imagination with the coolest and firmest grasp of fact. The Florence which produced Dante produced the shrewdest money-dealers of the middle ages. Savonarola walked down the same streets as Macchiavelli. Leonardo vibrated all his life between the restless search after spiritual beauty and the hard and abstract study of physical science. Michael Angelo was almost as great an engineer as he was an artist. Even in the eighteenth century the speculations of Vico were balanced by the researches of Volta, and Napoleon Buonaparte, who was simply a great Italian spoil, combined the fevered extravagances of a political dreamer with the cool exactness of a mathematician. If at the present moment the idealistic or imaginative element in the Italian nature seems to have retired into the background, it is simply because the circumstances of the time call the practical and positive elements to the front. In politics, for instance, it would be absurd to say that the work of Mazzini or Garibaldi is over, or that their influence on the finer and nobler minds of Italy has ceased; the truth is simply that the difficulties and problems which Italy has to meet, now that it is "made," are of a wholly different order from those which it had to meet when great patriots and enthusiasts were making it. The new nation finds that its first business is to set its house in order. It has got to make amends for the industrial and administrative inaction of centuries. There are railroads to be cut, canals to be opened, harbours to be made. In the South even the simplest elements of social civilization have still to be supplied; there was till the other day hardly a school through the whole kingdom of Naples, and hardly a road in all Sicily that was better than a mule track. A fleet and army had to be created, not merely for purposes of national defence, but as schools of national unity. The whole fabric of national education had to be built up from the very foundation. The mere civil administration of the country had to be organized under

the pressure of haste and necessity, and with the encumbrance of providing for a host of functionaries bequeathed by the wretched despotisms of the past. And all this work of internal reform, it must be remembered, had to be carried on amidst constant peril from without, amidst the menaces and interference of France, the thunders of the Vatican, the intrigues of the Bourbons, and the embarrassments arising from the origandage of the South and the disordered state of Italian finance. That the work as a whole is done, or even half done, we are not for one moment pretending. But there is not one of the great fields of labour which we have mentioned where work has not been resolutely begun; and it is worth while noticing the temper in which Italy has made its political beginning. It is something that a country which had no political traditions to fall back upon is creating political traditions of as sober and practical a sort as our own. Whatever instability may have attended its earlier Cabinets, the last six years have seen the same Italian Ministry in power; and, in spite of the sneers of English lookers-on at the "vague rhetoric" of Italian Parliaments, the influence of Signors Lanza and Sella is founded, not on their power of rhetoric at all, but upon the general conviction that they are practical and energetic men of business.

It is not, however, upon the temper of its Parliaments or statesmen that we are insisting so much as on the temper of the nation itself, as we may see it in its literature or in its journals. For there is an Italian literature, and a very busy one, although not of an emotional or imaginative order. The philosophical, historical, and scientific energy of the eighteenth century has revived in the metaphysical school of Naples, in the illustrious group of historians headed by Villari at Florence, and in the solar researches of Secchi at Rome. Philology numbers some of its keenest students in Italy, and the drift of national interest is seen in the abundance of publications on political economy and on administrative and municipal subjects. It is still clearer in the general tone and topics of the newspapers. Italian journalism has a vast deal yet to learn, especially in elementary matters such as the collection and publication of actual news; but in the direct and practical way in which it treats the social and political questions of the day it is far ahead of the journalism of France. The *Nazione* or the *Perseveranza* often contains articles which might have appeared in the best London newspaper.

There is evident in most of the current political discussion of Italy a wish to learn, without any of the old tendency to merely copy which distinguished their constitutional beginnings. The mimicry of French institutions which sowed Italy with "prefects" and "sub-prefects" is rapidly going out of fashion; but it is noteworthy that, while every Italian is convinced that local self-government must be restored, the tendency of public opinion is to prepare for the change by a careful study of local and municipal institutions elsewhere. So, too, in a careful review of the present defects of Parliamentary life in Italy, the *Perseveranza* lately directed attention to a peculiarity of English politics whose value is as yet hardly recognized by Englishmen themselves. After pointing out, as the two chief faults of Italian legislators, their excessive love of talking and the want of a more direct communication between them and their constituents, it suggested as a simple remedy the adoption of the English habit of "vacation speeches." By this means, it very wisely contended, the work of actual legislation would be facilitated, members could still express their sentiments, and the masses of the population would receive a constant and practical education in current politics. In much the same way a rival newspaper, at the time when the relations of the Church to the State were exciting public interest, actually took the trouble to translate and publish for its readers the whole of the Report of our Lower House of Convocation on the question of the election and nomination of bishops. The attention with which Italy regards English opinion is seen in the fact that few articles on Italian subjects appear in the leading London journals without being translated and republished in those of Florence or Rome. Even the diatribes which the *Times* periodically produces on the debt and financial embarrassments of Italy are brought before Italian readers, in spite of their ignorance and injustice. A large part of the debt of Italy has been incurred in the construction and purchase of railroads by the State, and the experience of Prussia has shown that no investment of money is likely to be more remunerative. Of the rest, not a little is owing to the sudden pressure of questions like education; the necessity, for instance, of providing in a few years schools for the whole of Southern Italy, where not a school existed before. That the army is a costly burden Italian statesmen know as well as the *Times*; what they perhaps know better is that the danger of foreign

intervention has by no means passed away and that, while compelled to maintain an enormous force in the presence of this menace to their very national existence, they have done their best to apply it to a yet more useful purpose by converting it into a great school and making it one of the most efficient means of public instruction.

From The Saturday Review.
THE GERMAN EMPIRE AND THE JESUITS.

It is evident that the rejection of Cardinal Hohenlohe as German Minister to the Papal Court was only one small incident in the great struggle for power between the German Empire and the Pope. The issue is now fairly raised and the battle has begun. The German Government has taken up the position that, the present attitude of the Court of Rome being avowedly hostile to Germany, it is incumbent on Germany to defend itself. The present Emperor, as Prince Bismarck observed, has not the slightest intention of repeating the memorable scene of Canossa. How the quarrel has come about is notorious, and it need scarcely be said that each party on its own principles is in the right. If there is a living source of infallible authority, knowing absolutely what is right and wrong, seeing how far the modern world is going astray from its true aims, and possessed of the power of deciding on the future fate of millions of human beings, it most naturally and properly claims the right to mould every action of human life in order to save as many souls as possible. The whole tendency of Catholicism in the last quarter of a century is to assert this claim more loudly every day and to act on it more boldly. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception, the dogma of Papal Infallibility, and the conversion of the power of the Pope into a power wholly of a spiritual kind, have been the leading causes or manifestations of this tendency. The Jesuits are the staunchest, most resolute, and most untiring champions of the new order of things at Rome, and their action has been sufficiently successful to convulse every Catholic country in Europe. Until lately the Catholicism of Germany was in the main of a quiet, sleepy, old-fashioned sort, resting happily under the shadow of the State, and giving little trouble to rulers or people. In Prussia Catholicism was especially honoured and cared for. A Prussian was free to be a Catholic or a

Protestant; but if he was a Catholic, the State required him to be baptized and married by a priest of his own persuasion, and Catholic bishops were treated as high and most respectable Government officials. There was no religious question in Germany, for the rival creeds were cherished and disciplined in the fold of the State. But now all is changed. The Jesuits teach that every principle on which the State acts in Germany is wrong. Ultramontanism comes into conflict with the allegiance of the subject to the King. Prelates assume to decide the exact shade of doctrine which Catholic officials must hold. The Old Catholics have raised the flag of rebellion against the prelates, and the prelates have excommunicated the Old Catholics. But it appears that excommunication, if it can have any effect on civil life, is illegal in Prussia without the permission of the Government. The Bishop of Ermeland, when this was pointed out to him, replied that if he found the canon and the municipal law in conflict, he should be guided by the canon law, and excommunicate as much as he pleased. This has drawn down on him the wrath of Prince Bismarck, who has informed him that, if he does not repent and see the error of his ways at once, the worst shall be inflicted on him that it is in the power of the State to inflict. As it is very improbable that the Bishop thus challenged will give in, a very short time will suffice to show what it is that Prince Bismarck proposes to do in order to coerce refractory Ultramontanes. In whatever he chooses to do he will undoubtedly have the support of the German Parliament, which has come forward to urge him to strike a strong blow if he strikes at all, and to expel the Jesuits and the members of other obnoxious orders from Germany. If the defiant bishops are put down, and the Jesuits got rid of, then it is hoped Germany will be at peace, and good sound German doctrine will be taught in every German school, and the dangerous and disruptive doctrines of the Syllabus will no more infect the minds of German youth.

To Englishmen it would seem at first sight as if the difficulty with which Germany has to contend were one of its own making. The State in Germany chooses to associate itself with an alien institution, to protect it, uphold it, and patronize it. If this alien institution gives trouble to its protector and patron, the simplest plan would appear to be to cease to have anything to do with it. Why should the Prussian Government trouble itself to see

that Catholic children are properly baptized, and Catholic bridegrooms and brides properly married? So long as men and women are legally married, that is all the State has to see to, and baptism is a religious ceremony with which parents may dispense, or which they may have recourse to, according to their tastes. If Ultramontane bishops choose to excommunicate a Catholic because he does not assent to the last new dogma, that is purely a matter between him and them; and if he does not believe that the excommunication will do him harm, no one is hurt. The Jesuits may be bad teachers, but so long as they do no one an injury appreciable by legislators, they may teach bad doctrine while better men teach better doctrine. This was the line adopted by some of the leading friends of the Ultramontanes in the recent debates. They professed to be perfectly indifferent to State support and protection, and only asked to be let alone. If all creeds were treated equally and the State stood aloof from all, it was not Catholicism, as they urged, that would suffer. Protestantism is the creature of the State, and would soon fall to pieces if it lost the prop that supported it. An attempt was made to defend the Jesuits on their own merits, to contend that they were excellent, useful, modest men, and very patriotic. But this argument was utterly irrelevant, and rested on an equivocation. The Jesuits are excellent men, or some of them are so, if once the principles on which they act are admitted as sound; but their whole lives are spent in attempting to establish a system which is at complete variance with the ordinary habits of thought and action prevalent among German laymen. The right line for their friends to take was obviously that a fair field should be given to all, and then, if truth was on the side of the enemies of the Jesuits, it might be expected that truth would prevail. Religious toleration is one of the watchwords of modern Liberalism, and the Ultramontanes called on German Liberals to be liberal. But the appeal met with no response in the German Parliament. One of the principal speakers declared that a Free Church in a Free State was one of the most foolish of fancies. The view of the majority was most unmistakably that the Jesuits should be put down, and not that they should be simply let alone. In order to judge of the true character of the struggle now imminent, it deserves to be attentively noticed that what may be termed the English theory on the subject, but which Count

Cavour desired to have carried out in Italy with far more logical boldness than it has ever been carried out in England, was distinctly submitted to the German Parliament and rejected. Men of known sense, liberality, and courage talked of the Jesuits in language which in England is scarcely ever heard except from the lips of Mr. Newdegate and Mr. Whalley. The perfect fairness of Constitutional government was treated as being entirely a mistake, and the example of Belgium was adduced to show that, under cover of what is called fair play and religious toleration, scheming priests and bold clericals may obtain the whole guidance of affairs and have the nation at their feet.

Several reasons may be suggested why this should have been the course of opinion in the German Parliament. Perhaps something should be attributed to the inexperience of a young legislative Assembly which thinks that whatever it wishes can be easily effected, and, in its sublime faith in its own decrees, ignores the difficulties of practical life. But there can be no doubt that influences prevailed of far greater moment. In the first place, to sever Church and State would be to most Germans to embark on an experiment totally foreign to all their familiar traditions and ideas. The Prussian State is always nagging at a man from the day he is born, if not before, till the day when even bureaucracy admits that, the fact of his death and burial being properly certified, there is no more to be done with him. To leave him alone at the most important crises of his life would seem to German officials something terrible. In Prussia the good man is the man who at every epoch of his tiny-history has received exactly the right certificate. The Catholics receive their certificates and the Protestants receive theirs, and the order of the world seems intelligible so long as the latter are regarded as soldiers belonging to a regiment that wears blue facings, and the former are regarded as soldiers belonging to a regiment that wears white facings. But a state of things in which religion was not used as a means of marking off men as if into different regiments would be, in the eyes of the most thoroughly German of Germans, revolutionary and monstrous. Then, again, it is easy to guess from some of the speeches made in the Parliament, that some part of the pressure put on the Government to use sharp measures arises from the fears of that portion of the German Catholic world which is not Ultramontane. Many

German Catholics dislike the Jesuits, and, without distinctly rejecting the dogma of infallibility, bitterly resent its consequences. But they scarcely dare call their souls their own, and dread what they may have to go through at home or in provincial circles if they boldly oppose those whom the Pope regards as his best friends. But if the State would act and clear all the Jesuits away, what a comfort it would be! and if in a German home it was distinctly apprehended that the State had to be obeyed or disobeyed, even feminine zeal would recoil from the advocacy of disobedience. But by far the most potent cause of the desire for State action was, we may be sure, the political one. The friends of the Jesuits are politically the enemies of Germany, and find in France a field from which to carry on their attacks. The Jesuits are of necessity, and on their own principles legitimately, the allies and instruments of a foreign foe. Regarding the German Empire as the greatest barrier in the way of their success, which it no doubt is, they wish to help France to break it up. Great allowance must be made, even by the friends of religious toleration, for the Germans under these circumstances. Ultramontaniam and Communism are in many respects very similar, as they both aim at destroying national life and moderate liberty. In a country like England, where neither of them have any real power, we can afford to let them both have their fling within certain bounds; but it would try our temper and our liberal principles very severely if either displayed an irritating activity as the partisan of a foreign and hostile Power. The struggle between Germany and the Papacy is so far a political one that Germany may be justified in having recourse to political means of defending itself. But it is easier to state this in general terms than to see what measures could be adopted that would be efficacious, and yet would not have a tinge of petty and undignified persecution.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.

THE GERMANS AND LIBERALISM.

THE reports of the debate in the German Parliament on the expulsion of the Jesuits will naturally be read with the deepest interest all over Europe. The debate sets in the clearest light the intense antagonism which exists between the whole spirit of the German nation as new-

ly constituted and the Roman Catholic Church. It is an antagonism which goes to the very foundation of things, and extends far below the somewhat small and rather technical quarrels which have broken out between the Jesuits and the Roman Catholic clergy on the one side and the German Government on the other. These and some other occurrences to which we need not now refer are amongst the most interesting results of the great triumph of the Germans and the deep humiliation of France. They make it plain enough that, for a time at least—probably for a very much longer time than the present generation can regard with any immediate personal concern—the centre of interest in European history and politics has changed, and that a new and all-important element has been added to European politics. Till now, neither Germany nor Italy has been a nation, and the rulers by whom parts of those countries were governed, though in many instances more or less constitutional sovereigns, were far less closely connected with the general feelings of the nation at large than either the Emperor of Germany or the King of Italy. The erection of these two great Powers into nations governed on the general principles of modern Liberalism is by far the greatest event of our century. It is one of the greatest events that has happened in the world for many centuries. We are beginning to see the indistinct outline of a few of the great effects which may be expected to follow from it. They will reach far beyond the region of politics, in the common sense of the word. They will perhaps do less than some people are not unnaturally disposed to anticipate in the direction of changing old boundaries and altering what used to be called the balance of power. Of course it would be rash and even absurd to prophesy, but there is certainly much plausibility in the opinion that both Germany and Italy are too strong to be attacked wantonly, even if there were any Power likely to attack them in such a spirit; and that, on the other hand, it is difficult to imagine great Powers with stronger motives for keeping the peace. No one, of course, can presume to say what course may find favour in the eyes of the French, or how the Russian Government may see fit to conduct itself under the variety of contingencies which may be expected to arise. So long, however, as Europe is spared from wars of vengeance and race, it seems likely that the chief effect of the great victory of Germany may be to

strengthen, deepen, and extend far and wide Liberalism in the English sense of the word, as against Ultramontaniam on the one hand and what the French would call the democratic and social Republic on the other hand. Speaking with that degree of vagueness and neglect of details for which only we have room in these columns, it may be said that there are in Europe in the present day three great social and political parties—the Liberal party, the clerical party, and the revolutionists. Each has curious and deeply seated sympathies with and antipathies to each of the others. The Liberals and the clerical party are both essentially aristocratic. This, as regards the Liberals, may appear a paradox; nevertheless it is perfectly true. The essence of modern Liberalism is free play for individuals, or every one for himself. This is essentially an aristocratic doctrine. As a fact there are great differences between man and man, and if society is so constituted that every one is enabled to pursue his own objects in his own way, giving to the interests of others such a degree of attention as his benevolent instincts or tastes or his sense of his own interest may dictate, there can be no doubt that the minority of able and energetic people will get the good things of the world and will in one way or another form its governing body and direct its course. The ideal of Liberalism, in short, is an aristocracy by natural selection. On the other hand, the Liberals and the revolutionists are both in the present state of society reformers. Each is more or less dissatisfied in every part of the world with the established institutions and established creeds of mankind, and they accordingly unite in the effort to alter them, though they differ widely as to the means by which the alterations should be made, and as to the objects to which they should be directed. Finally, the clerical and the revolutionary party may each be described as Socialists. The name has acquired a bad meaning, but its proper and original signification is that society comes first and individuals afterwards; that society is and that self is not the true centre of human thought, energy, and speculation.

As to the antipathies between the three parties they are obvious enough, and do not require specification.

Such being very broadly and vaguely the nature of the great division of European politics, let us consider how it is affected by the establishment of two new nations—Germany and Italy. The an-

swer, as we have already said, appears to us to be that Liberalism will be immensely reinforced, and clericalism and revolutionary socialism discouraged to a corresponding extent. The reasons of this are obvious. In old times it was a possible, and indeed the common, not to say the universal course, that nations should be established upon clerical principles and grow up under clerical auspices. How far this is from being the case, either with regard to modern Germany or modern Italy, it is needless to say. The debate on the Jesuits shows the true state of the case with superabundant clearness. It is impossible to read it without seeing the strongest determination on the part of the Germans that, whatever else they may or may not be, whether or not they call themselves Roman Catholics, they will not be priestridden, they will be the masters of the clergy, and not their servants. If, however, a nation is not to be clerical, it must in these days be essentially and radically liberal. No nation ever has been, and it is difficult to see how any nation ever could be, organized on the principles of revolutionary socialism. A nation of any size must contain numerous classes of inhabitants. They must be engaged upon an infinite variety of undertakings, and this vigorous diversified activity, subject only to rules made by common consent, is as essentially unsocialistic as it is essentially unclerical. If a great mass of people are not to be kept together by a common religious faith and subjection to a class connected with the clergy, they must be kept together by trade, by common interest in the administration of common affairs, by all the machinery of modern life and activity, and this is Liberalism. A society can be imagined, no doubt, in which a general organization might be framed so contrived as to secure for every one a rateable proportion of the enjoyments of life, and to prevent any one from getting more; but nothing of the kind has ever been established. If it were, it would do away altogether with nations and national life as we understand them. It is on this ground mainly that it appears to us that the establishment of two great nations, one of them by far the strongest in the whole world, or, at all events, in Europe, is the greatest triumph for Liberalism in the broad sense of the word which has occurred in this or any other generation.

The special character and position of the Prussians, under whose auspices Germany has become a nation, gives the matter far greater weight and importance

than it could have had under any other circumstances. The *Daily Telegraph* the other day published a letter from its Prussian correspondent on this subject which seemed to us to have about it a good deal of the truth and instructiveness of a clever exaggeration. It made a great deal among other things of the assertion (which we received with considerable doubt) that German boys and youths never play, but only harden their muscles and expand their chests upon strictly utilitarian principles at scientifically devised gymnastic schools. Of course, one takes such a fancy for what it is worth, but there can be no doubt at all of the grave, solid, earnest character of the nation; of their thorough and invincible determination to get what they want, or of their faith in the efficacy of the means by which it can be got. They want money and money's worth; they want the various arts of life; they want political power and what belongs to it; and they believe in the possibility of getting what they want by education, by organization—in a word, by taking trouble. This is, we think, the gist of Liberalism. It is a very grave, rather cold, and exceedingly sturdy creed, and, thanks to Prince Bismarck and what he represents, it has done a good deal towards getting its foot on the neck of the more romantic and softer creeds which stand on each side of it.

From The Leisure Hour.
BEARDS.

"When the piercing north comes thundering forth,
Let a barren face beware;
For a trick it will find, with a razor of wind,
To shave a face that's bare."

Few fashions have been so capricious as those connected with the hair of men's faces, and if we look back for several ages we shall find that the custom of shaving has continually been introduced and as frequently been discontinued. Alexander the Great before an engagement commanded Parmenio to have all his soldiers shaved, and gave as his reason that a long beard affords a handle for the enemy. We suppose that the old Normans held the same view of the inconvenience of a beard, for they shaved close, and deceived their enemies. Harold's spies reported that William the Conqueror's army was composed not of soldiers but of priests. After the Conquest, however, when the Normans settled in England, they began to wear beards, and, in order to make a distinction

between them, orders were given that the English should shave.

If we look at the portraits of our kings we shall find that each of them adopted a special fashion of his own. Henry I. wore a beard trimmed round, and Richard Cœur de Lion a short beard. Henry III. shaved, but his son, Edward I., wore a curled beard. There is a touching story of Edward II. in his misery which illustrates our subject. When he was at Carnarvon, Maltravers ordered the king to be shaven with dirty cold water, at which he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Here at least is warm water on my cheek, whether you will or no."

Edward III. wore a noble beard, but Richard the Second's was short. During the fourteenth century, close shaving became prevalent with young men, and the old men wore forked beards, as Chaucer describes the merchant: "A merchant was there with a forked beard." Henry IV. wore a beard, but Henry V., Henry VI., and Edward IV. all shaved. Henry VIII. shaved until he heard that Francis I. of France wore a beard, and then he allowed his to grow. Francis did not approve of all his subjects wearing nature's covering for the face, and he therefore obtained from the Pope a brief by which all ecclesiastics throughout France were compelled to shave or pay a large sum. Bishops and richly beneficed clergy paid the fine, but the poor priests were forced to comply with the requirements of the law. Some men have been so proud of their beards that they have taken their loss greatly to heart. Duprat, son of the celebrated Chancellor and Cardinal Legate, possessed a very fine beard. He distinguished himself at the Council of Trent, and was soon afterwards appointed to the Bishopric of Clermont. On Easter Sunday he appeared at his cathedral, but to his dismay he found three dignitaries of his chapter waiting to receive him with razor, scissors, and statutes of the church in their hands. He argued without avail, and to save his beard he fled and abandoned his bishopric. A few days afterwards he died of grief. When Philip V. of Spain gave orders for the abolition of beards throughout his kingdom, many a brave Spaniard felt the privation keenly, and said, "Since we have lost our beards we seem to have lost our souls." Sir Thomas More thought of his beard at the time of his execution, and moved it out of the way of the headsman's axe.

The plays, poems, and treatises of the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles

I. are full of amusing allusions to the varieties of fashions in beards. We learn from them what were the various styles adopted by different wearers, as the French, Spanish, Dutch, and Italian cuts, the new, old, gentleman's, common, court, and country cuts. Stubbs, in his "Anatomie of Abuses," says that the barber will ask "whether you will be cut to look terrible to your enemy or amiable to your friend, grim and stern in countenance, or pleasant and demure." The worthy old clergyman, William Harrison, to whom we owe our chief knowledge of the state of this country in the sixteenth century, gives the following account of the varieties of beards in his description of England:—"Some are shaven from the chin like those of Turks, not a few cut short like to the beard of the Marques Otto, some made round like a rubbing brush, others with a *pique decant*, (oh! fine fashion!) or now and then suffered to grow long, the barbers being grown to be so cunning in this behalfe as the tailors. And therefore if a man have a leane and streight face a Marquesse Ottens cut will make it broad and large; if it be platter like, a long slender beard will make it seeme the narrower; if he be wesell-becked, then much heare left on the cheekes will make the owner looke big like a bowdled hen, and so grim as a goose; if Cornelis of Chelmeresford saies true, manie old men weare no beards at all."

Taylor, the water-poet, gives the following catalogue of the styles worn in his day:—

"Some like a spade, some like a fork, some square,
Some round, some mow'd like stubble, some stark bare;
Some sharp, stiletto fashion, dagger-like,
That may with whispering a man's eyes out-pike;
Some with a hammer cut, or Roman T, —
Their beards extravagant, reform'd must be;
Some with the quadrate, some triangle fashion,
Some circular, some oval in translation;
Some perpendicular in longitude;
Some like a thicket for their crassitude;
That heights, depths, breadths, trifurim, square, oval, round,
And rules geometrical in beards are found."

We extract a few verses from a ballad on the beard, apparently written in the reign of Charles I.:—

"Now of the beards there be such a company,
And fashions such a throng,
That it is very hard to handle a beard,
Tho' it be never so long.

- "The Roman T. in its bravery,
Doth first itself disclose,
But so high it turns, that oft it burns,
With the flames of a torrid nose.
- "The stiletto beard, oh! it makes me afraid,
It is so sharp beneath,
For he that doth place a dagger in 's face,
What wears he in his sheath?
- "But methinks, I do itch to go thro' stitch
The needle-beard to amend,
Which, without any wrong, I may call too
long,
For a man can see no end.
- "The soldier's beard doth march in shear'd,
In figure like a spade,
With which he'll make his enemies quake,
And think their graves are made.
- "The grim stubble eke on the judge's cheek,
Shall not my verse despise;
It is more fit for a nutmeg, but yet
It grates poor prisoners' eyes.
- "What doth invest a bishop's breast
But a milk-white spreading hair?
Which an emblem may be of integrity,
Which doth inhabit there."

All this care of and attention to the personal appearance took up much time, and many of the religious writers complain of the time wasted in the trimming of beards. The once celebrated Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, in describing the habits of her grandfather, who was a Turkey merchant, says that his valet was some hours every morning in starching his beard and curling his whiskers. She adds that a companion read to him during the time upon some useful subject. If what Hutton tells us in his "Follie's Anatomy" (1619) was true, the morning's dressing could not have been sufficient to keep the beard in proper trim:—

- "With what grace, bold, actor-like he speaks,
Having his beard precisely cut i' th' peake.

How neat 's moustachios do at a distance stand,
Lest they disturb his lips or saffron band:
How expert he's; with what attentive care,
Doth he in method place each straggling hair."

Andrew Borde wrote a treatise on beards, which is lost, and only known to us by an answer written by one Barnes. The latter takes up the cause of beards in a very trenchant style. He asks, "Pray, Andrew, did not Adam possess a beard? and if he did, who shaved him?" and, "Didn't the apostles have beards?" Therefore we should imitate Samson and thousands of old philosophers who would not be shaved. Matthew Green wrote the following impromptu in answer to a lady who inquired why beards were not worn as in former times:—

- "To brush the cheeks of ladies fair,
With genuine charms o'erspread,
Their sapient beards with mickle care
Our wise forefathers fed.

But since our modern ladies take
Such pains to paint their faces,
What havock would such brushes make
Among the loves and graces."

For unlately the same reason cannot be given now, because our ladies do not disfigure their faces, but the general introduction of beards and moustaches a few years ago met with great opposition at first; and it is said that in 1851 the parishioners of a country parish discontinued their attendance at church on account of the clergyman taking to a beard. Now, whether we go among rich or poor, laymen or clergy, we find beards everywhere, and doubtless the change of fashion has improved the appearance and benefited the health of many, for we can say with the old ballad:—

- "A well-thatcht face is a comely grace
And a shelter from the cold."

According to the Sydney Herald, the schooner *Surprise* has lately made a visit to the coast of New Guinea, penetrating fifteen miles up the Manoa River. Contrary to the general impression, the natives, who were hitherto supposed to be ferocious in their character and opposed to the visits of strangers, were

found to be mild and gentle in disposition. They were of the Malay stock, and had never seen white people before. On the departure of the schooner, under Captain Paget, they exhibited every demonstration of sorrow, the women weeping and the men accompanying the party to a considerable distance.